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TRAVELS

IN

TURKEY, EGYPT, NUBIA,

AND

PALESTINE,

IN 1824, 1825, 1826, AND 1827.

BY

R. R. MADDEN, ESQ. M. R. C. S.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, NEW BURLINGTON STREET.

1829.

R.B.R.
DS
48
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1829
v.2

C. Whittingham, 21, Tooks Court, Chancery Lane.

CONTENTS

OF

THE SECOND VOLUME.

Page

LETTER XXV.

TO JOSHUA BROOKES, ESQ.

JOURNEY from Cairo to Thebes—Sites of ancient Towns —Innoxious Serpents—Canal of Benesouef—Sepulchral Well—Siout—Coptic Priests—Egyptian Harem —Arab Customs—Antiquity of Circumcision . . . 1

LETTER XXVI.

TO JOSHUA BROOKES, ESQ.

The Crocodile—The Chameleon—The Lizard—Hyenas —Rats—The Jackall—The Wild Cat—Egyptian Vulture—The Ibis—The Serpent—Serpent of Paradise— The horned Viper—Poisons—Locusts—Quails . . . 17

LETTER XXVII.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

Arab Shepherds—Court of Justice—The Sheik el belled— Abden Casheff—Sir Hudson Lowe—Attempted Assassination—Injustice of a Casheff—An English Traveller—Case of Consumption—Monk of Negadè—Missionaries—Character of one—Excessive Heat—Arab Hospitality—Arab Hut—Importunities—Accident— Price of Blood—Satisfactory Conclusion—Monuments of Thebes 33

Page

LETTER XXVIII.

TO DR. RICHARDSON.

Inscriptions of Travellers—Magnificent Ruins—Temple of Carnac—Devastation—Temple of Gourna—Isis and Osiris—Egyptian Theology—Consequent Reflections—Egyptian Architecture—Egyptian Statues—Ruins of Empires—Chronology of the Egyptians 55

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BLESIGTON.

Female Travellers—Egyptian and Hindoo Mythology—Hindoo Shaster—Process of Embalming—Mummies—Funeral Processions—Tombs in the Libyan Mountain—Manufacture of Mummies—Arab Troglodytes—Purchase of Mummies—Credulity of a Copt—Researches among the Tombs—Methods of Embalming—Skulls—Mummy-powder—Comparative Craniology—National Craniology—Coptic Language—Coptic Bishop—Probationary Priest 72

LETTER XXX.

TO M. MONTEFIORE, ESQ.

Remains of Latopolis—Temple at Edfou—The Typhonium—Mr. Lane—Ruins of Koum Ombos—Ibrahim Pacha—Elephantina—National Prejudices—Assouan—Island of Philœ—Egyptian Paintings—Nubian Hut—Violent Termagant—Curious Affray—Character of the Nubians—Female Children—Love-charms—The Author consulted as a Magician—Extraordinary Coincidence—Embarkation for Alexandria—Descent of the

Page

Nile—Ruins of Antinoè—Ophthalmia—Violence of the Complaint—Greek Priest—Ruins of Canopus—Bay of Aboukir—Route to Damietta 102

LETTER XXXI.

TO DR. JAMES JOHNSON.

Gratitude of the Levantines—Beauty of the Women—Banquet—Music—Amusements—Turkish Pusillanimity—Climate of Damietta—Arab Poetry—The Casida, by Imim Ali (Mahomet's Cousin) 136

LETTER XXXII.

TO DR. JAMES JOHNSON.

Translation of the Lamja, an Arab Poem, by Ebn el Wardi 156

LETTER XXXIII.

TO THE REV. D. M'PHERSON.

Route from Damietta to Suez—Branches of the Nile—Lake of Menzalè—Various kinds of Fish—A Pelican—The Plague—Aga of San—Effects of Suspicion—The Androsphynx—Antique Statue—Site of Zoan—Goshen—Route of the Israelites—Mode of Travelling—Camp of Bedouins—Repast—Character of the Bedouins—Their Simplicity and Hospitality—Diseases prevalent among them—Their Mode of Life—The Kamsin—Arab Stud—The House of Pharaoh—Journey across the Desert—Arab Precaution—Adjerond—The Mirage—Caravan of Pilgrims—Arrival at Suez—Sand of the Desert—Causes of its Accumulation.. 168

Page

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE REV. D. M'PHERSON.

Diseases of Suez—Inhabitants—Situation—The Red Sea —Intriguing Greek—El Naba—Valley of Amara—Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea—Locusts —Quails—Manna—Eastern Use of Numbers—Serpents and Reptiles—The Wilderness—Conjecture respecting Heliopolis—Ancient Canal—Bedouin Robbers 206

LETTER XXXV.

TO JOHN ELMSLIE, ESQ.

Beirout—American Missionaries—Mr. Nicolaison—Syrian Converts—Levantine Converts—Mount Lebanon—Anecdote of Berber—Sheik Bechir—Emir Bechir —Religion of the Druses—Curious female Ornament —Turkish Soldier—City of Sidon—Lady H. S——e —Her Residence described—Her Opinions—Her Character and Influence—Ingratitude of the Pachas and Emirs—Yacoub Aga—Lady H. S——'s Opinions of Political Characters—Mr. Pitt—Mr. C——g—Sir F. B——tt—Duke of Y——Syrian Christians—Arab Jealousy—Belief in Astrology—Character of the English—Intrepidity of Lady H. S——e 230

LETTER XXXVI.

TO DR. HAMILTON.

Belief of Magic in Syria—Captain C.—His Opinions—Mr. S.—Arab Magician—Hebrew Prophet—Magician of Lebanon—His Imposture—Conversation with Lady H. S. on Astrology—Coptic Professor of Magic —Convent of San Antonio—Animal Magnetism—Witchcraft—Jewish Sorcerers 270

Page

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MRS. COGAN.

Nazareth—Hospitality of a Greek—Convent of Nazareth—Rumour of War—Conscription—Picture of our Saviour—Traditions of the Greeks—Lines written in Nazareth—Customary Present 293

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE REV. H. CAMPBELL.

Mount Tabor—Cana of Galilee—Persian Manna Plant—The River Jordan—Ruins of Tiberias—Bedouins—Hot Baths of Tiberias—Tombs in the Mountain—Thermal Springs—Lake of Tiberias—Encounters with Banditti—Bedouin Robbers—Jaffa—Ramah—Mountains of Judæa—Valley of Elah—Route to Jerusalem 305

LETTER XXXIX.

TO EDGAR GARSTON, ESQ.

Jerusalem—Lines written in the City—Monks—Clergy of Jerusalem—Conduct of the Armenian Ecclesiastics—Bribery—Church of the Sepulchre—Mount Calvary—Jewish Missionary—Jewish Traditions—Mosque of Omar—Jewish Marriage—Ceremonies attending it—Mount of Olives—Festival of the Madonna—Jewish Sepulchres—Journey to the Dead Sea—Convent of Saint Saba—Site of Sodom and Gomorrah—Ghor—Sea of Lot—Dead Sea Apple—Frighted Arabs—Mar Saba—Bethlehem—Importunity of the Inhabitants—Cave and Church of the Nativity—Attempted Assassination—Consul of Jaffa—Tyre—Lithotomic Operation—Barber-surgeons—Arab Surgeons—The Cossu Plant 323

Page

LETTER XL.

TO JOHN ELMSLIE, ESQ.

Arab Conversazione at Damietta—Personages present at it—A Barber-surgeon—A Hadji—Turkish Officer—Levantine Christian—Arab Sheik—Character of the English, &c. 373

LETTER XLI.

TO MRS. E. FORDE.

Greek Pirate—Capture of an Arab Schooner—Captain Hare—Character of a Greek Captain—Adverse Gale—Arrival at Alexandria—Mr. and Mrs. Montefiore—Death of Mr. Salt—His Character 385

LETTERS

FROM

TURKEY, EGYPT, NUBIA, AND PALESTINE.

LETTER XXV.

TO JOSHUA BROOKES, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Thebes, July 29, 1826.

In my voyage up the Nile, from Cairo to this far famed city of "the hundred gates," which took me one and twenty days to accomplish, I had some opportunity of getting information on a few points connected with the Natural History of Egypt. This information has no pretensions to arrangement or erudition; but simply consists of such facts as appeared to me to be most curious.

Before I give you this account, I presume you will not be displeased to receive some little history of the particulars of my voyage, in which I perhaps may have to speak of "Antres vast and deserts idle," but as little as possible of "the Anthropophagi, and men whose heads do grow beneath their shoulders."

I set out from Cairo with a French gentleman, Monsieur Chantpie, who expressed a desire to accompany me, only a few hours before we started. I hired a *kangea* with two cabins, and a crew of six Arabs, including the Captain or Reis, for the monthly sum of four pounds ten shillings, out of which the Arabs had to maintain themselves, and to pay no inconsiderable portion of the *nolo*, or freight, to the government. Of the antiquities along the Nile, from Cairo to Thebes, I do not presume to offer you any description: Hamilton, on this subject, has left nothing to be desired.

The distances of the principal towns from Cairo, and their present and former names, I shall only notice; for as there is no sort of itinerary of Egypt, any account of these, however brief, must spare the traveller a great deal of research.

	Miles.
From Cairo to Benesouef	78
From Benesouef to Minieh	80
From Minieh to Antinoè	28
From Antinoè to Siout	54
From Siout to El Sharkie.	36
From El Sharkie to Girgè	56
From Girgè to Kenneh	28
From Kenneh to Thebes	38

Making about four hundred miles from Cairo to Thebes. I knew this voyage to be accomplished in five days; but the average period is from fifteen to twenty-five.

The following are the received sites of the most celebrated ancient towns of Middle and Upper Egypt.

The Vicinity of Saccara	Memphis.
Ditto of Old Cairo	Babylon.
Ditto of Metarea	Heliopolis.
Ditto of Minieh	Co.
Ditto of Siout	Lycopolis.
Ditto of Achmin	Chemmis.
Ditto of El Sharkie	Antenopolis.
Ditto of Benesea	Oxyrinchus.

The Vicinity of Sheik Abadè . . . Antinoè.
Ditto of Achmoumin . . Hermopolis Magna.
Ditto of Dendera . . . . . Tentyris.
Ditto of Kenneh . . . (some deem) Chemmis.
Ditto of Keft . . . . . Coptos.
Ditto of Kaus . . . . . Apollinopolis Parva.
Ditto of Carnac, Gourna, and Luxor . Thebes.

One of our first delays, at starting, was occasioned by the swarms of insects, of every sort, which made their appearance after dark: independent of the vermin, we had also reptiles on board, of a more appalling kind, and these were serpents. Two, of about three feet and a half long, were occasionally seen in the bottom planks; and when I inquired how the Arabs could think of sleeping with such venomous creatures in the boat? they told me, when serpents got into a boat all the rats quitted it; and besides, that this species was innoxious. This I afterwards found to be the case; there were few houses in Cairo and the upper country, in which these small grey serpents were not to be found in the chimneys and terraces: yet I heard of no injuries done by them.

I did not, however, like the idea of a snake

crawling over my face at night, or perhaps playfully folding round my neck while I slept. I ordered every thing to be taken out of the boat; and what with threats, bribes, and blows, I made the Arabs sink the boat on the bank of the river, and leave it immersed in water for four hours. The difficulty of this operation was very trifling, the expense small, and the advantage great. I would recommend every traveller to do the same before he embarks in a kangea.

At Benesouef we found a well-informed young man, who was employed in making a new canal in the vicinity of the town, by the Pacha's orders: he had been in England, and was said to be the natural son of Ali Pacha, of Yanina. I left him in high favour with the governor of Benesouef: when I next heard of him, he was at the bottom of the Nile. It seems that the canal he had just completed overflowed its banks, owing to circumstances over which he had no control; namely, the unusually large inundation of the river. A part of the town was carried away by the waters from the canal, and my poor friend, the engineer, was seized by order of the governor, put into a sack, and cast into the river.

At Antinoè, by Mr. Salt's desire, I remained all day, to copy an inscription on one of the numerous tombs in the adjoining mountain. It was a walk of a couple of hours in the burning sun to get to the place; and the sepulchral excavations I discovered were so extensive, in the sides of the mountain, that in some of them, notwithstanding our torches, we were in danger of not finding our way out. At length I thought I discovered the tomb which Mr. Salt had instructed me to seek, and which he imagined had only been penetrated by one traveller. In an inner apartment I perceived a deep well, cut in the solid rock.

From the sequestered situation of this tomb, and the amazing depth of the well, I flattered myself with the hope that no European had visited the interior. My companion was of the same opinion, and we immediately sent to our boats for ropes and candles, to explore the cave at the bottom.

Our *Reis* endeavoured to dissuade us from so hazardous an enterprise; but when he found we were determined on it, he volunteered to go first, and had the courage to descend the well. We fastened a strong rope round his waist, and, with

a lamp suspended from his feet, we let him down. Five or six Arabs of the country were witnesses of the scene: they grumbled a good deal; and had any accident occurred, I have no doubt that our lives would have been sacrificed.

After giving away upwards of eighty feet of rope, we had the satisfaction to see our man below on *terra firma;* and after remaining in the adjoining chamber for about ten minutes, he gave the signal to hoist, and we had the good fortune to get him to the top without the slightest injury.

We were sadly disappointed to hear that in the sepulchral chamber there was not a single mummy; all he found in it was a piece of a Frank letter, with penciled notes on the back. I discovered, by the address on the letter, that they had been written by Dr. Bromhead, a friend of mine, who had visited Upper Egypt two years before, and who unfortunately died of a fever, near Aleppo, a few months ago.

We rewarded the *Reis* for his courage with a present of two dollars, and gave a few piastres to the Arabs who assisted us.

At Siout, which is the capital of the province, we stopped two days. I was desirous of getting

some particulars relative to the customs which prevail in a village, a few miles distant, with respect to those who are destined to be the guardians of the great *harems* in the Turkish empire. It is only in this village where the ceremony is performed; and, strange to say, the actors are Christian priests of the Coptic rite. An Arab latterly has set up in opposition to them, but as yet he is little known. I was the more anxious to gain some correct information on the subject, for it is variously described by authors, and no two coincide in the mortality which attends it. Burckhardt's description approaches nearest to the truth, but it is still far from correct; Sonini's is altogether erroneous, and Belzoni's account of the mortality is little better. He says, that out of every three who are brought there, two perish; while, in point of fact, the mortality is fifteen in a hundred. I compared the number of cases for two years, and the result was, that out of ninety, from the age of seven to thirteen, ten had died from the immediate effects, and three from subsequent debility. I had a great deal of difficulty to get at the truth; the Arab pretended he stopped a hæmorrhage by a charm: the Copts assured me that they were in

possession of a styptic, prepared from herbs, which was unknown to all the world beside. I left them without procuring any correct information on the subject. In the evening it was noised about the town, that the *hakkim* of the English Consul had arrived there. I received visits from all sorts of people, praying for physic; a Casheff took me to see one of his wives, who was dying of dropsy. He had a large *harem*, and while I was examining the patient, the young ladies, who had probably never seen a Frank before, at least, in their apartments, whispered with one another, and tittered in my face; they all wanted to have their pulses felt,—some of them had pains in the head, some in the elbows, and one roguish looking girl, with laughing eyes, put her hand to her left side, complaining of pain, by telling me her "heart was very hot," "*elb suknè kitir*." I had no doubt of her malady; but before I had time to prescribe for her, she was in a roar of laughter. Even the women of a more advanced age were exceedingly merry, considering their situation. They appeared not to recollect that levity sometimes leads to the sack; but in Egypt, however, this extremity is much less common than in Turkey;

and Egyptian women are consequently less reserved than Turkish females. In the grandest harems, I had frequently occasion to observe here, that even in the presence of the husband, the ladies laughed and talked with as little restraint as if the "lord of the creation" was far away, or looked with too much contempt on a Christian to deem it possible for a woman to suffer his approach.

But even in Egypt, notwithstanding the natural repugnance which all virtuous females feel for people who wear hats and do not shave their heads, they too often, I fear, forget heaven and their husbands, and accustom their sight to the presence of infidels.

But in Egypt, as in every other country, the asylum of chastity is the peasant's hut; misery may surround the mud walls of an Arab dwelling, and though the interior would be too mean for a pig-sty in England, hospitality is still to be found within the precincts of its hearth, and chastity behind the ragged screen, which conceals many an olive beauty from the stranger's gaze.

How it comes that the female peasant is, every where, the strictest preserver of her virtue, I know not; but in the most dissolute kingdom in Europe,

—in the provinces of Naples, I had occasion to observe the same fact, and the poorer the peasants the more chaste were their women; as if, indeed, they were already so indigent, that they could not afford to part with honour.

But, in the *harem* I was speaking of, when pipes and coffee were introduced, the husband entered; he asked me in how many days I could cure the sick woman? and how many purses I required? I always thought of Abernethy when these pithy questions were put to me. I told him (with all necessary caution), that life and death were written in the great book above, but that I feared the angel of death was hovering over his house. I perceived his anxiety was very great; I am sure he must have loved the woman, for the tears came into his eyes; a demonstration of feeling which I never met with in Turkey. His only observation was *Kiddi, hakkim!* "Is it so, doctor?" I assured him, whatever medicine could do for the poor woman should be tried, and sent to her immediately; and, as usual, I went away with the consoling ejaculation, that there was "but one God, and all things were possible to him."

On the stairs, as I followed my conductor, a

hideous old black woman tapped me on the shoulder, and thrust an embroidered handkerchief into my hand. It was impossible to avoid looking back: on the top of the staircase I encountered the laughing eyes of the lady who complained of the pain in the region of the heart; I had just time to catch a gentle smile, and to see the yellow tops of her tapering fingers pressed to her eyelids. On opening the handkerchief, I found a bit of charcoal and a clove tied with a piece of red silk, and both enclosed in a scrap of paper. There was no writing, and none was requisite; the charcoal and the clove were eloquent. The Casheff offered me some pieces of gold, which I refused; he then promised he would send a courier to the different Casheffs in the neighbourhood, to ensure me their protection. I told him he might render me a greater service, by merely sending one of his confidential people with me to the Coptic priests and the Arab hakkim, in order to compel them to give me a true description of the ceremony. He immediately granted my request. Mr. Chantpie went alone to the Arab's house: I proceeded to the Copt's, gave him to understand that I was a

medical man, and that his telling me a single falsehood would only bring him into trouble; the *Chiaous* of the Casheff confirmed my threat. The Copt saw he had no alternative but to speak the truth, and this, I believe, he now did for the first time.

I learned from him that, in the summer season, the slaves are usually sent to Siout. They are too young to have any moral repugnance to the ceremony through which they must pass; and most of them, I was assured, were so delighted with the prospect of the fine clothes they were to wear, and the horses they were to ride, when they filled the high office of guardian to the Seraglio, that they were well contented to be qualified for this post of honour.

Immediately after the first step of the proceeding, they are thrown down on the hot sand, which is piled on a level with their backs; a mode of treatment which supersedes, in Egypt, the application of styptics as well as ligatures. They are left in the sand till sunset, two men by their sides never ceasing to rub their spines, which they consider the principal seat of the circulation; and

when they are removed they are kept on bread and water for fifteen days.

This custom is of very great antiquity: so early as the days of Nebuchadnezzar such persons were kept at court. The prophet Daniel was one of these; and we are informed by the scriptures that he was beloved by "the prince of the eunuchs." Josephus, moreover, says, "Among the eunuchs there were four of most excellent disposition, and one of these was called Daniel."

Whiston informs us that all courtiers were generally called eunuchs by the Jews, on account of the great number of ancient courtiers who were of this description. Indeed, there is reason to believe that men devoted to science, formerly made a merit of these practices; those which Nebuchadnezzar brought up were intended for wise men and magicians.

The female children of the Copts and Arabs undergo a peculiar operation at a very early age. Every traveller describes it differently; but Sonini, who pretended to have seen it, misled people more than any other. He would find it difficult to explain how it happens that the other inhabitants of

Egypt do not perform the operation, and yet are exempt from the inconvenience he describes. Neither the Levantines nor Armenians practise it.

The accurate Niebuhr was mistaken in supposing that the practice was merely a measure of cleanliness. The antiquity of circumcision goes as far back as the days of Abraham, three thousand eight hundred years ago. I purchased a mummy at Cairo, which proved that it was used amongst the ancient Egyptians, though not universally; for one mummy which bears the marks of circumcision, there are at least fifty which do not.

Josephus endeavours to prove, that Abraham not only imparted learning and sciences to the Egyptians, but also this custom.

Herodotus, on the other hand, says, "the only people who used it, were the Colchians, the Egyptians, and the Ethiopians; but the Phenicians, and those Syrians that are in Palestine," (the Jews) "confess that they learned it from the Egyptians."

Which is in the right I do not pretend to say; but Josephus's reason for the difference in the period in Syria and Arabia is very satisfactory.

" Isaac," he says, " was circumcised on the eighth day; and from that time the Jews continue the custom of circumcising their children within that number of days. But as for the Arabians, they circumcise after the thirteenth year, because Ishmael, the founder of their nation, who was born to Abraham of the concubine, was circumcised at that age."

The instrument used in this operation, as well as in embalming, was an Ethiopian stone; I have seen this stone represented in sepulchral paintings in the temples; and also the original found at Thebes, in the possession of Mr. Salt.

What I intended to make the subject of this letter, namely, a few facts connected with the natural history of the country, I must reserve for my next letter; till then

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXVI.

TO JOSHUA BROOKES, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Thebes, August 7, 1826.

I HAVE already informed you that you were not to expect any thing like arrangement in the account I promised to give you, connected with the few cursory observations I had an opportunity of making on such animals as are to be found in the vicinity of the Nile.

About one hundred miles above Cairo I saw the first crocodile; after passing *Siout* these animals were very numerous on the sand banks of the Nile, and my only amusement for fifteen days was shooting at them. I had not the good fortune to kill one the entire voyage, though I frequently saw the balls gliding off their scaly backs into the water. Near Thebes I purchased a small one from the

Arabs, which was about six feet long. Their length varies from twelve to thirty feet. I got a small portion of this crocodile boiled, to ascertain its taste; the flavour a good deal resembled that of a lobster, and though somewhat tougher, it might certainly be considered very excellent food. I am astonished that the Arabs, who can eat snails, locusts, land tortoises, and camels' flesh, should reject that of the crocodile. The female takes three or four days to deposit her eggs in the sand; the number varies from fifteen to forty-five. Sir Thomas Herbert says sixty, and that the animal has sixty teeth, sixty vertebræ, and lives sixty years. The most striking peculiarity in the crocodile is its digestion; in the one I dissected, I found several pebbles in the stomach: the rectum was situated close to the lower orifice of the stomach, but this passage is remarkably small for the size of the animal; and the Arabs assert that it always leaves the water to eject the contents of the intestines. I believe there is some truth in this statement. On each side of the fore shoulder I found a follicle containing musk, or at least a substance which does not differ from it in smell; one weighed two drams, the

other something less. This, in Cairo, fetches a large price, being used as an ingredient for *madjoun* powder. It takes two months to bring the eggs to maturity; and when they are deposited, they are about the size of those of a small goose.

Our boatmen were constantly in the river dragging the boat, and in those parts where the crocodiles abound most, yet no accident occurred; in all our route I only heard of one little girl being drawn into the river, off the bank, some months ago: indeed the Arabs say that a crocodile cannot seize its prey in the water.

Hasselquist and most modern authors think the crocodile is the leviathan of the Scriptures, "Can a man draw up the leviathan?" says Job, and answers it in the negative; and on this Hasselquist remarks, that "this animal, the crocodile, has the power of destroying the hooks and other instruments of fishermen." Now Herodotus describes the method of catching the crocodile by a hook; so that, if this be true, the crocodile cannot be the leviathan of Job.

The *chameleon*, which is another of the *lacerta* species, I have latterly examined a good

deal: I had one which lived for three months, another two months, and several which I gave away, after keeping them ten days or a fortnight. Of all the irascible little animals in the world, there are none so choleric as the *chameleon*. I trained two large ones to fight, and could at any time, by knocking their tails against one another, ensure a combat; during which their change of colour was most conspicuous. This change is only effected by paroxysms of rage, when the dark green gall of the animal is transmitted into the blood, and is visible enough under its pellucid skin. The gall, as it enters and leaves the circulation, affords the three various shades of green which are observable in its colour.

The story of the *chameleon* assuming whatever colour is near it, is, like that of its living upon air, a fable. It is extremely voracious: I had one so tame, that I could place it on a piece of stick, opposite a window; and in the course of ten minutes, I have seen it devour half a dozen flies. Its mode of catching them is very singular: the tongue is a thin cartilaginous dart, anchor-

shaped; this it thrusts forth with great velocity, and never fails to catch its prey.

The mechanism of the eyes of the *chameleon* is extremely curious; it has the power of projecting the eye a considerable distance from the socket, and can make it revolve in all directions. One of them, which I kept for some months, deposited thirteen eggs in a corner of the room; each was about the size of a large coriander seed. The animal never sat on them: I took them away to try the effects of the sun, but from that period she declined daily in vivacity, and soon after died.

The *lizard* called *gecko*, is a small poisonous reptile, which the people of Thebes dread very much; its peculiarity is, that its poison exudes from the feet. I was called to a man at Gourna, who was in a dying state, from ulceration of the *fauces;* the only account I could get of his malady was, that he was taken ill after eating a water melon, over which one of these poisonous lizards had crawled. From what I hear in Thebes of the numerous accidents arising from provisions imbibing this poison, I think they are much

more to be dreaded than serpents. A very virulent poison used to be prepared in Egypt, by tying up a live *gecko* by the tail, placing a piece of glass underneath it, and then flogging the tortured animal, till it discharged its venom on the glass.

Two *hyenas*, as untameable as any of their species, I kept at Alexandria, in a magazine, at large, for several months. A man slept in the magazine all this time, and had no apprehension of these ravenous animals. The fact is, I believe, that the hyena never attacks a man, notwithstanding what Bruce says, of the Desert being covered with the bones of the dead; horrid monuments of the victories of this savage animal.

I inquired of the Bedouin Arabs, if the *dib*, as they call him, ever attacked men? They said, he never did: that he has been known to attack an infant; but this rats do in Egypt. I attended an infant in Alexandria, the child of a German carpenter, which was pulled out of its cradle by rats at night, by dragging at the clothes on which it was laid; and in the morning, the child was found with the tops of the toes and

fingers gnawed in several places. Yet this does not prove that rats venture to attack men; and I am warranted in saying, that hyenas never do. The extent of their depredations, is prowling about the verge of the Desert, and at night seizing on lambs, goats, and poultry, in the Arab tents, and carrying them away.

Hyenas have the same instinctive dread of man which dogs have of the hyena. I sometimes brought dogs to the door of the magazine, but the moment they beheld the hyenas, their terror was so great, that they howled with fear. I never could induce them to eat during the day; they slunk away whenever I approached them, but at night they not only devoured five or six pounds of camel's flesh, bones and all, but destroyed every thing they could lay hold of, though they did not molest the man who slept there. I sometimes placed water for them, but they very rarely drank it, or if at all, in very small quantities. I sent them to England, with a live stock for them, of four sheep, as many young pigs, and thirty fowls.

The *Jacall* of Egypt is intermediate in his character and appearance, between the fox and

the dog. He is commonly found in caves and sepulchres; and tears up at night the bodies which have been superficially interred. I saw one of these in the Jews' cemetery, in Alexandria, gnawing a human leg. Here in Thebes, in almost every ancient tomb I visit, they dispute the entrance with me. Their cry is so lugubrious at night, and so much resembles the melancholy howl of the Arabs, that I have frequently mistaken it for the common lamentation of the women, at the moment of a death. This animal abounds in Palestine, and some consider it to be the fox of Samson.

The wild cat is common here. In one of the narrow passages of a subterranean tomb I distinguished the sparkling eyes of this animal gleaming on me from the bottom of the gallery. While I was debating upon what was best to do, it rushed between my legs, and escaped. My only candle was extinguished by the violence of its exit: I was upwards of an hour groping my way to the outer passage, tumbling over mummies, and in danger of falling into the mummy pits, which yawned beneath my feet. My Nubian

servant wept like a child; he expected every moment to see the *Shitan.* My only fear was that I should never see any thing, for we were in utter darkness, and at one time likely enough to continue in it.

The wild cat, as well as the crocodile, was a sacred animal. I have purchased mummies of both. The mummy of the crocodile is always small; that of the wild cat is about three quarters of a yard long. I have procured the mummies of seven domestic cats, beautifully preserved, for eight shillings of our money.

The Egyptian vulture is the most horrid looking creature you can imagine. I believe it is the original of the harpy of the poets. The Turks look upon these birds as sacred; and some religious people make a merit of feeding them daily in Cairo. They certainly are extremely useful in removing some portion of the carrion which infects the atmosphere of all Egyptian towns. I have sometimes brought these vultures within a few feet of me, by holding a large piece of meat before them; and when I have thrown it to them, they have stuck their talons into it and

carried it away. Their black beaks were always covered with gore, their wrinkled faces polluted with every species of filth, and altogether their appearance was most disgusting.

The *ibis* is still to be found in Egypt, or at least a bird which corresponds with it, in its qualities, size, and form. It comes down from Ethiopia at the increase of the Nile; and, from this circumstance, is named by the Christian Arabs *Abou Hannes*, or father John. It feeds on the smaller reptiles, and the Arabs say on serpents; but this I doubt. The plumage is of a dark grey, and the wings are speckled with black spots. I shot one at Siout, which was about the size of a large pigeon, the beak crooked, and the feet of a light yellow colour.

In the time of Herodotus, the ibis was rare in Egypt, he says, on account of the drying up of the canals. The priests informed him, that when the Nile decreased, vast *numbers* of flying serpents filled the air, which were always put to flight by flocks of the ibis.

Plutarch describes their plumage as being black and white, like the *pelargus*. The mum-

mies of those I have seen are so corroded by time, and so changed in colour by the process of embalming, that it is impossible to form an idea of their plumage. The body is nearly the size of the Egyptian vulture; the beak like a curlew's, and its height, in a standing posture, from its feet to the back, is eighteen inches. This bird was venerated by the Egyptians for destroying serpents and the eggs of the crocodile; the ichneumon, likewise, for the same reason. The flying serpent, of which we read in Herodotus, is generally supposed not to exist now, and some imagine that it never did exist. The Arabs of the *Hedjaz*, however, speak of it; and I have just heard from Mr. Burton, that one of our travellers met with a small winged serpent in the Desert adjoining the Red Sea.

The serpent which is so commonly represented on Egyptian temples, in an *erect posture*, and which people commonly imagine to be a fabulous animal, Mr. Salt assured me he met with in Nubia; it stood four or five feet from the ground, rolled in spiral circles. That gentleman is also of opinion, that all ancient nations worshipped it.

Whether they paid honours to it for its supposed wisdom, or for the purpose of averting its wrath, is not easily determined; but in every country we find serpents connected with religious rites and dogmas.

The serpent of Paradise and that of the Parsees are the common agents of man's destruction. On every temple in Egypt it is to be found, surrounding a winged globe in one place, to represent the architect of the world; biting his tail in another, to give an idea of eternity. In India, the serpent is in the hand of every divinity; in Greece, it was made the emblem of health; and with the Hebrews, its brazen image was raised on high to avert misfortune.

In the very learned "Commentary on the Bible, by Dr. Adam Clarke," I have noticed, with regret, some puerile criticisms, unworthy of his erudition, on the serpent of Paradise. He endeavours to get rid of what some deem a difficulty in the description; for instance, its talking to Eve, and walking before the curse was pronounced, without having at present the organs, or any remains either of those of speech or location. Dr.

Clarke very learnedly and piously attempts to prove that it was not a serpent, but a baboon, which tempted our first mother: and his argument is, that the baboon has the organ of speech, albeit long disused: moreover, that the serpent has no legs with which he could ever have walked, and the baboon has. The last argument is, that the serpent is not a *cunning* creature; and that the Hebrew word, *nachash*, signifies not only a serpent but a baboon.

Of the horned viper (*cerastes coluber*), the virulence of whose poison is so great as to destroy life in a very short time, I purchased two from those serpent catchers called *psylli;* one was a foot long, the other nearly a foot and a half: the horns are very little larger than those of a snail. I killed one with the vapour of muriatic acid, for the purpose of extracting the poison: this I found in a small membrane, under the two hollow teeth in the front of the jaw. I collected the venom carefully on a piece of glass; it hardly amounted to three drops. I then dried it over a candle; and, on examining the residue with a microscope, I found it to consist of sharp saline

spiculæ, extremely minute, and of a reticular appearance. Half of this I gave to a dog in a piece of meat; it produced no sensible effect. I then diluted the remainder, smeared the point of a lancet with it, and wounded the dog in the shoulder: this application he only survived three hours. I was desirous of ascertaining the virulence of this poison; for an Arab surgeon, or barber, of whom I made various inquiries as to the nature of the poisons so much used in the country, assured me, the most deadly were prepared from the mucous membrane of the intestines of man, taken from the putrid body, and from the venom extracted from the mouths of serpents. The former poison has been already mentioned to me by two other learned Arabs: I will inquire further into the fact, for I believe there is some truth in it*.

Of locusts, I have not seen a single one in

* Anatomists are but too well acquainted with the deadly poison which exudes from the dead bodies of those who die of peritoneal inflammation: but I believe the virus is produced after death in all cases of abdominal inflammation; the Arabs pretend the poison is only to be found on the inner coat of the intestines.

Upper Egypt. A French traveller, who passed this place, on his way from the upper country and the Red Sea, assures me, the Arabs make a sort of bread of them. They dry them, grind them to a powder, then mix this powder with water, and make small round cakes, which serve for bread, when that necessary article is scarce: so that the account of St. John's eating locusts, in the Wilderness, can only be sneered at by fireside travellers.

In Smyrna, I have seen the sky literally black with them; they appear always to travel in a straight meridional line, and thus all the line of country in their course is laid waste by them: "the land which is before them is as the Garden of Eden; and behind them, a desolate wilderness."

Quails come to Egypt in immense flocks annually, at harvest time; the Arabs take them by thousands, in nets; and consequently, they are so cheap in Alexandria and Cairo, that one may have a large dish of them for a couple of piastres. But whether these are the quails of the Israelites or not, I cannot determine. Like all other migrating

birds, they fly in a direct line, from north to south, and very rarely from east to west.

My information is scanty on this subject; but, such as it is, receive it with the assurance of my respect.

Yours, my dear Sir, very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXVII.

TO CHARLES MATHEWS, ESQ.

MY DEAR MATHEWS, Thebes, Aug. 18, 1826.

YOURS was the "lily hand" which waved my last adieu, on the beach of Baia, when "my bark was on the sea, and my boat was on the shore." Years have passed away since the light of your jocund countenance beamed upon me; and the memory of those scenes of humour we have together witnessed, I am anxious to recall, for I fear their repetition is not to be expected.

If a few of my adventures between *Siout* and Thebes can renew the recollection of our old exploits, I shall esteem the labour of my letter as well bestowed; but should I have curtailed my "after dinner's sleep," to receive only a yawn of reminiscence for my pains, I must play the stoick, and affect to be content. Our voyage, from Siout

to Thebes, was followed by a succession of misfortunes; sometimes, indeed, of the most ludicrous description. Provisions were so scarce that nothing was to be bought at the villages but black bread and dried dates.

In the evening it was our custom to send the crew ashore, to milk the first goats and buffaloes they met with. One night, after doing so, some Arab shepherds, who were tending their flock on the river side, imagined our men had a design on their sheep, and actually pretended there was one missing. My companion, hearing this, unfortunately began to bleat like a sheep, in the chamber of the *kangea.*

The Arabs, who only made the charge of the theft for the purpose of extorting money, now thought they had lost one in reality. Our Reis and the crew protested their innocence, offering to let them search the boat, but nothing would satisfy them. I lost all patience, and threatened to shoot the man who laid hold of the gunnel of our boat. The crew at last offered to refer the business to the *Sheik* of the village. This was agreed to.

The Reis and myself marched off to the *Sheik*

el belled's house, surrounded by twenty or thirty Arabs, and there the robbery was gravely stated; half a dozen ragged children were produced as witnesses; they all pointed at me as the person who decoyed the flock to the river side. The name of *Frangy* was enough to get a thousand witnesses against a Christian.

The thing looked serious: in England a man might be hanged on such testimony; but, nevertheless, I was exceedingly amused; it was the first time I was ever brought before a tribunal of justice; and to appear there on a charge of sheep-stealing was so singular that, when I was called on by the Sheik for my defence, I burst into laughter.

No Arab can withstand the influence of good-humour; he can resist reason, but he cannot mirth—he is proof against rage, but a smile overcomes him; his tympanum is inured to vituperation and his tongue to invective, but the ludicrous triumphs over all. Let his opponent only relax his features, let a bystander only say something ridiculous, the choler of the Arab vanishes into thin air; in short, he cannot resist good humour.

The *Sheik el belled*, who should have committed

me for contempt of court, was the first to catch the contagion of my mirth; his big sides shook again with laughter; my accusers, who preserved their gravity, so long as I did not stare them in the face, exclaimed to one another, "*Wallah Magnoon!*" "By G— he is mad!" and then they laughed even louder than the justice.

At length, when the Sheik recovered his gravity, he again questioned the *Reis* about the lost sheep; but here I cut the matter short by pulling the Viceroy's firman out of my pocket, in which I was styled "the prince of *hakkims*, the most learned among the learned, and the friend and *hakkim bashi* of the English Consul; the friend of his Royal Highness."

The consternation of the Arabs was highly amusing; the *Sheik el belled* placed the firman on the crown of his head, kissed it, and made many excuses for having detained me a moment on such a foolish charge. I invited him aboard my *kangea;* he and my accusers followed me, and I regaled them all with pipes and coffee. There the fellows sat on my carpet, all courtesy and politeness, who, a few minutes before, were indicting me on a charge of felony. We parted the best friends in

the world, having thoroughly convinced them we had not stolen even a lamb.

At Manfalout, we found then residing the governor of the province, Abden Casheff, a Turk of high rank and excellent character. I had a letter of introduction to him, from Mr. Salt, with whom he was on terms of intimate friendship. He received me with great pomp, in his tent, surrounded by three or four hundred soldiers, principally blacks. He made me smoke out of his own splendid pipe, which is the highest honour a Turk can bestow, and asked me a thousand questions about the usages and manners of the Franks; he was the only Turk I ever met with who seemed totally devoid of fanaticism.

Before I left him, he presented me with a letter, which he begged me to translate for him, as it was in Frank writing: I was not a little astonished to find it was an epistle from Sir Hudson Lowe; the contents I do not deem it necessary to state, but it was a very long letter, diplomatically tedious. Abden Casheff spoke of Napoleon and Sir Hudson as if he had learned the characters of both from O'Meara's book; and was even acquainted with the attempt which the Frenchman

made on Sir Hudson's life in Smyrna. In Egypt, by the by, a similar attempt was meditated by a French officer, and was frustrated by the consul. Sir Hudson, however, went abroad in Cairo and Alexandria without any apprehensions: he was "so clear in his great office," that he feared not being "taken off:" the possession of a stomach pump, moreover, which never left his sight, made the assurance of his safety doubly sure.

On leaving this excellent Casheff, I found his servants already in our boat, having brought us four sheep, five and twenty fowls, two large jars of butter, a basket of rice, two baskets of bread, and a quantity of fruit. This very acceptable present was wholly unexpected, and what was most singular, we could not prevail on his servants to take a single paras. "No," they said, "our master would cut our heads off if we took money from travellers, who, when they go beyond his district, may want their money, for they can get no bread without it*." I hardly knew which to admire most, the generosity or the delicacy of this man.

* A few weeks after my interview with this excellent man, he was murdered by his own soldiers; they cut the strings of

A couple of days after our departure from *Manfalout*, I had once more the pleasure of ascertaining what bad marksmen the Turks are; a soldier took deliberate aim at me, with his pistol, at a very fair distance, not exceeding twenty paces, and yet he missed me, the ball passed through the sail of our boat. The only reason for this shot, was my refusing to take the fellow aboard: I had just jumped up on the cabin to seize hold of the tiller (for our steersman was rather nervous when the pistol was levelled) when he fired at me. My servant had sense enough to bring me my fowling piece, which was then loaded with shot, without my bidding: this I instantly presented at the scoundrel, who was reloading his pistol; the moment he saw the gun pointed he skulked away: all our Arabs were very anxious for me to fire at him; I did not want inclination, but I was aware that had I put a grain of shot into the person of a

his tent, and when he was buried beneath it, they hacked him with their swords, till he was literally cut to pieces. One of the Pacha's relatives was privy to the murder; he, of course, escaped, but the ruffians who acted under him were exiled to Syria. I saw three hundred of them going down the Nile to be embarked at Damietta.

Mussulman, and more especially of a Turkish soldier, I should have endangered my life and that of my companion. We stopped at the next village to complain to the *Casheff*, of this outrage. He seemed little disposed to give me any satisfaction; he pressed my firman to his lips and forehead; he said God was great "*Allah Karim;*" and when I demanded of him, if the soldier should be taken up? he said, if it pleased God "*Insh Allah.*" Whenever I expressed my indignation at his evasive answer, and my determination to represent his conduct to the Pacha, he simply rung the changes on *Allah Karim* and *Insh Allah;* and when the *Mogreb* was announced, or the evening hour of prayer, he very unceremoniously knelt down with his face towards us, and commenced his nine prostrations. Every time I said any thing about writing to the Pacha, he exclaimed, *Allah Wachbar*, "There is only one God," as if he were wholly wrapped up in his devotions. I left him without getting any sort of satisfaction; he had the impudence to send down to the boat to beg I would give him a cure for bile, "*Safra*" (the universal complaint of the Arabs); I sent him back word there was only

one way of inducing me to prescribe for him, and that was by bastinadoing his soldier before my face, and that he should have no physic from me till he performed that act of justice. I heard no more of him.

Shortly after, we met a *kangea* with an English Jack, it turned out be that of Mr. L——, an English traveller; we dined together; I found he was a medical amateur, and had been physicking the Arabs beyond the second cataract.

I was surprised to see his crew of Nubians excessively pale and meagre; and still more so to learn that every man of his had suffered from a contagious malady contracted in the unwholesome neighbourhood of *Kenneh*. Mr. L—— very humanely undertook to cure them all: small mercurial applications were judged necessary; but Mr. L—— confessed to me, that small as these were, the effects were terrible, and his crew was already toothless. I asked to see the medicine, and, to my horror, I found that, owing to a mistake (not of Mr. L——'s, but of the person who wrote the label on the medicine), the corrosive ointment of nitrate of mercury had been employed instead of the simple unction. Turks and Arabs

take a great deal of killing, no others could have survived this cure. The only case of pulmonary consumption I met with, or heard of, in Upper Egypt, I was consulted about the night after I left Mr. L——.

A Frenchman came aboard of us at midnight, to beg I would go to a neighbouring boat to see his companion, the servant of Mr. Champollion's nephew. I found the man extremely oppressed; he had been throwing up blood, and having no lancets about me, I bled him with a penknife. He caught his disease in Nubia, in consequence of a *coup de soleil*, not from exposure of the head, but of the breast to the rays of the hot sun at noonday. As this is a very extraordinary case, as to the cause of the disease, I think it worth stating:—The man had been sleeping under an awning, the heat had obliged him to leave the breast of his shirt open, and in this situation he fell asleep; the sun, in the mean time, penetrated through an aperture in the awning, and his chest alone was exposed to the burning rays. He had inflammation of the lungs next day; and when I saw him he had been two months ill.

His master, who has just arrived here, tells

me, he has received an account of his death from Siout. This gentleman is collecting copies of the hieroglyphics of Thebes and Lower Egypt, for his uncle, the famous Champollion: he reads the inscriptions fluently, and he tells me the most ancient monument in Egypt, having written characters upon it, is the large obelisk at Carnac, and that the inscription on it is some ages prior to the era of Moses.

At the village of Negadè, not far from Thebes, there is a Roman Catholic convent, tenanted by a single Monk, who is maintained there by the Propaganda. I went to the convent, intending to take up my abode there for the night, but the manners and appearance of the reverend gentleman were so disgusting, that I was obliged to change my determination. I had scarcely entered when he commenced pronouncing an anathema on the Copts (the inhabitants of the village were principally Copts); and I soon found out that the hostility of his reverence to his fellow Christians arose entirely from his missionary zeal. He failed in converting them, so he considered a superfluous malediction could not damn them a jot deeper; this is, at least, the most charitable

construction I can put upon his fury. Strange as it may appear, this feeling of hatred to those who refuse our good offices is natural to most men. Do not imagine its excess is peculiar to the Roman Catholic missionaries. Those of all churches in the East, I am sorry to say, I have every where observed to be intemperate in the expression of their inveteracy against such as resist their good intentions.

The German missionaries, the English missionaries, the American missionaries, all are so enthusiastic in their endeavours to draw "the nominal Christians" (for such they call them) of these countries from "ignorance and idolatry," that I have seen some of them, by dint of reviling false doctrines, fall into the natural error of hating those who believed in them. Messrs. M'Pherson, Muller, and Nicolaison are exceptions to this spirit of intolerance. I often wished, for the sake of the mild character of Christianity, that they had communicated a little of their gentleness and liberality to others.

But the reverend gentleman of Negadè was certainly the most violent of all his brethren. He told me "a most excellent trick which he

played on the Coptic Bishop of the town, a few days before :—

" I was resolved," said he, " to get rid of the Bishop, for having excommunicated two of his flock who attended my chapel. I went to the Cadi, who was a friend of mine; I had cured his wife of a pernicious fever, and he was bound to me for having done so. Effendi, said I, through the blessing of God (to whose name be glory), I once cured your wife of a grievous sickness. You said I was your friend; I now mean to put your friendship to the proof: I have just heard from *Cairo*, that his Highness, Mohammed Ali, has banished several Copts from *Masrattik*, on account of their superstitions, and for not having paid the taxes. Now, Effendi, if you have not yet received the imposts of Negadè, what is the cause? why it is this, the Bishop is a contumacious person, and he hinders the *Rayahs* from doing what they ought. Banish him, *Effendi!* and all will go well.

" The *Casheff*," continued his reverence, " swallowed the hook; the knave of a Bishop was sent about his business, and my friend, the Effendi

(prosperity to all his house), has since then been more friendly to me than ever."

This worthy Monk complained to me a good deal, of the nightly depredations which the "rascally Copts," "Copti scelerati," committed in his garden; they were in the habit, he said, of scaling the wall, breaking down his fences, and stealing his cabbages; "but you see that door below," he said, "I shot one of the scoundrels on the top of it; I watched the garden, from the chapel window, two nights running, with my double-barrelled gun by my side, and when I discerned a head popping over the posts, I let fly at the robber, and sent two or three more balls in the same direction; I had the satisfaction of tracing drops of blood in the sand several yards from the door, but the fellow nevertheless got away."

On leaving the convent, I observed that the garden door was perforated by balls, in five or six places. I listened to the recital of the shooting of the cabbage stealer, and the banishment of the Bishop, with great calmness. I took my leave of his reverence, after inquiring about the convents in the neighbourhood, which I gave him to un-

derstand my friend and myself were commissioned to relieve with money, by a most excellent and affluent Roman Catholic nobleman. We did not give him time to recover from his astonishment; the few words he spoke we drowned with our adieus; "Adio Signore Padre! adio! adio!" He pursued us to the boat; his convent, he said, was lamentably poor, and he had borrowed money from the Turks, to rebuild the altar; if we would only give him twenty dollars it would be something towards the support of religion.

"Listen to me, father," said I to him, "you shall not have twenty *paras* from us; for what security have we, that instead of devoting our charity to the true purposes of religion, you would not expend the money in purchasing powder to shoot your fellow Christians, for depriving you of a cabbage! what security have we, that our alms, instead of enabling you to live peaceably within the walls of your convent, would not furnish you with the means of carrying on your intrigues with the common enemy of all Christians; of banishing, perhaps, another bishop, and leaving another Christian flock without a pastor: not a single *paras* shall you have, my good father, and

this Copt here, who is listening to my words, may tell his priest, that whenever you again interfere with his people, he may write to the English *hakkim*, at *Scanderia*, and that he shall lay the complaint of your conduct before the Pacha." I cast off the boat from the shore, leaving my reverend gentleman thunderstruck with surprise.

The provisions we got from Abden Çasheff were all finished before our arrival at Thebes. If we killed a sheep in the morning we were obliged to get through it at dinner, with the assistance of our Arabs, for it would not keep till morning. The weather was dreadfully oppressive, the thermometer, in July, was seldom below 106° at half-past two in the afternoon, in the cabin of our boat; and here, in Thebes, the reflection of the sun on the white surface of the mountains behind Gourna, increases the temperature. The common range of the thermometer, at half-past two, in the shade, has been 109°.

Two days before our arrival here we were destitute of every thing; we could get no provisions in the villages. One evening I was begging to purchase a little milk; an old Arab observed that I had been refused, he took my companion

by the hand, and said, "Follow me; whatever I have you shall have the half of it." He gave us about a gallon of milk and a score of *douro* loaves. I offered him five or six piastres in return; a sum, in Upper Egypt, equivalent to ten times the amount in England; and he who knows the misery of the Arabs can best appreciate the hospitable feeling which could prompt the refusal of so large a sum. The old man stroked his white beard, "*La la! hawadgi,*" said he, "I do not want your money, why should I take any for a mouthful of bread, does it not all come from God?"

He pointed to heaven as he spoke; and, as this simple and beautiful expression passed his lips, I thought it gained additional impressiveness from the natural dignity of his manner, and the unstudied elegance of his Arab oratory.

Most travellers have remarked, in eastern countries, the natural eloquence of the uncivilized inhabitants; but, in no nation is the love of eloquence carried so far as in Egypt and Arabia. I have listened with delight to the declamation of their sheiks, when the people assembled round them in the evening to hear the politics of the village, or the eternal stories of the "*elf lele*

wahad," the thousand and one nights of the Arabian Entertainment. Their common language is half prose, half poetry: Phillips might attend their *soirées* to cull fresh flowers of oratory, and Moore take a corner of their mat to collect new images of poetry.

The last day of our voyage I was solicited to visit a sick child of an Arab peasant. I accompanied the mother to the village, and found the poor child in a miserable hut, six feet in height, the door three feet and a half high, neither window nor chimney, and the room within about twelve feet square, and filled with smoke*; it was impossible to remain within, the smell was so dreadful and the smoke so suffocating. The child was brought out; it was covered with confluent smallpox, and a variety of amulets and charms were tied on its neck and forehead.

After giving some medicines to the mother, I was going away, but I was now surrounded by a

* The wretchedness of an Arab hut is only to be compared to the squalid misery of an Irish cabin; but, taking all things into consideration, an Irish peasant is more to be pitied than an Arab *fellah;* the destitution and degradation of both are on a par, the latter is not the victim of intolerance, he is only the slave of fanaticism.

score of women, young and old, some beseeching me for physic, to make them fruitful; others for medicines to make them fat. "May your mother live a thousand years! and give me one dose, *hakkim*, that my next child may be a *wollat*, (a boy). May your father have a happy sight of you! *Yahnooni*, my darling! and write me a *waraga*, a charm to make my husband love me. May your heart be as large as the moon, *yahabibi*, my friend! and give me some *dowa*, physic, to prevent my sister from having any more girls! May your wives keep your word on the top of their heads, great *hakkim!* and give me a few grains of *madjoun*, for my poor husband."

I was so teased, that I was obliged to fly at last, with half a dozen women at my heels, roaring all the way, "*dowa, dowa!*" "physic! physic."

A few miles below Thebes, I went ashore to have some shooting: I had my hand close to the muzzle of the gun, when, on putting the stock to the ground, something touched the trigger, and off it went close to my ear. The Arab who stood by me unfortunately got some of the shot lodged in his shoulder; he cried out "murder!" with a loud voice; and when the

people approached, he swore I shot him expressly! My own hand, however, had been injured by the blow, and the blood which covered it convinced the Arabs, better than my words, that it was a mere accident; and, on examining the wounded man, there was only two or three grains of the scattered shot in the thick part of the arm, which I offered to extract; but this he absolutely refused to have done, till I made him a compensation in money, for what he called the mortal injury. He wanted one hundred piastres: I offered him six; this, he said, he would never consent to take. I had shed his blood, and must pay for it, if not in kind, in money: less than thirty piastres he never would receive—"not a paras less."

It was something to get him down from one hundred piastres to thirty. I now proposed leaving the sum I was to pay to the arbitration of the Arabs; and accordingly we all got seated under a date tree. I sent for my pipe and coffeepot, the two great preliminaries to important business, and after thus bribing the palate and stomachs of my arbitrators, I opened the proceedings; explained to them the cause of the accident, and

terminated with two or three *Allah illahs*, and as many *inshallahs*, touching the man's speedy recovery. My opponent now drowned my voice with his vociferation. The loudness of his complaint, the importance of his brow, and the vehemence of his gesticulation would have convinced a stranger the debate embraced a consideration of some thousands of piastres; whereas, in point of fact, the question was one of five and twenty.

I enjoyed the scene: the arbitrators at last decided I was to pay fifteen, and a present to them, for the trouble of giving judgment, of some soap (a valuable article in Upper Egypt) and half an *ake* of green tobacco. I consented, with a good grace, to the terms; and considering the price of blood among the Arabs, I was very well satisfied to get so well off.

I now had to shake hands with all the arbitrators, and about twenty times over with him I shot; kissing our hands as often as they came in contact, and repeating, "*Salamaat kitir, aleikum salaam, thaib delwakti dum malesh;*" in English, "I salute you very much, peace be upon us, all's well now, no matter for the blood." I took two of the

shot out of his shoulder, with a penknife, the other could do him no injury.

At length we had a distant view of the glorious monuments of Thebes. The most splendid vestiges of antiquity existing on the earth became gradually more perceptible; and, at length, we were safely moored in *Gourna*, after a tedious voyage. Fear not that I am going to inflict a catalogue of antiquities on your patience. *Momus* has no temple here: the site of the ancient city is marked by melancholy for her own; and the name of Charles Mathews is fatal to sadness.

If ever the mercury, in your mental barometer, sink to the gloomy point of "rain," you may then have leisure to bestow an hour of your dulness on your old friend,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXVIII.

TO DR. RICHARDSON.

DEAR SIR, Thebes, Aug. 29, 1826.

On the base of one of the colossal statues which bears the name of Memnon, and which is covered with the inscriptions of ancient Greeks, in attestation of the statue's salutation of the sun,—among the names of the many enlightened travellers of ancient and modern times, who have recorded on that monument their visit to the most celebrated city of all antiquity, I had the pleasure of reading your name, and that of Mr. Salt. In other places I found the names of Bruce, Burckhardt, Belzoni, and many other far-famed individuals; some of them written with a pencil, others scratched with the point of a knife; many, after half a century, are as legible as ever; lightly as they were traced,

their characters are uneffaced: but the hands which formed them have long since forgotten their cunning.

One of these inscriptions was written with a light heart—the fingers which penned it knew not age; the heart which suggested it had then known no sorrow; but subsequently they became well acquainted with both; and the recollections this inscription awake, inspired me with the most melancholy feelings. How little does it now matter to Bruce where the Nile has its source! of what importance is it to Burckhardt what the pilgrims do at Mecca? of what avail to Belzoni is the discovery of the Theban tomb? glory peradventure gilds their graves; but calumny has been the living recompense of one; fanaticism has embittered the dying moments of another; and poverty has been the portion of the widow of the last. The learned of all Europe have reaped the fruits of Belzoni's enterprise; in the advancement of science, he encountered death itself: the aperture of the temple of *Ebsambul*, of the royal tomb at Thebes, of the pyramid of Cephrenes, are the themes of the scientific; but the widow of the man who accom-

plished all those wonders is left to pine in indigence in a foreign country, threatened with a prison, if she face her own.

Had I visited Thebes for no other purpose than to measure monuments and design ruins, I might, perhaps, give you the proportions of each propylon, and the dimensions of every plynth and pillar. But I believe you would little thank me for my pains. Like me, you must have felt how the mind is overwhelmed with the contemplation of the gigantic ruins which are encountered at every step; how the spirit seems to soar above the level of its earthly shrine; and when it descends from the sanctuary of gods and heroes, how paltry are the details of the mere artist, to whom the revolutions of empires and of religions are of less consequence than the accuracy of a sketch, or the exact size of a shattered column. You must have often marked the effect of material immensity on the mind; how vision wanders in a species of delirium over the magnificence of Carnac, which all at once it cannot comprehend; and how the sense aches with delight while one vast wonder succeeds another; and the retina, like the sensorium, becomes crowded with images,

which require silence and solitude for contemplation. The impression which Thebes makes on the thinking traveller is indelible; the levity of his mind, however marked it may have been, is likely to become less; and his gravity, however great it may hitherto have been, imperceptibly becomes augmented. There are sermons in every stone of the great temple of *Carnac;* there are motives for meditation in every sepulchre of *Gourna.* I no longer wondered that an army, in the midst of a pursuit, should ground their reeking arms, by one common impulse, and send forth the simultaneous plaudits of their blood-stained hands, while they gazed on the sublime tranquillity of the Memnonium.

I no longer wondered that a French soldier should feel "the religion of the place," and that in its contemplation the Mameluke enemy should be forgotten. It grieved me to see travellers visit this sacred city, for the unprofitable purpose of making insignificant representations of monstrous figures and mutilated statues; devoting years to designs which abound already; and so taken up with the surface of antiquity, that the shadow of its substance shoots across their path

in vain, and the philosophy of ancient science seeks access to their minds without effect. The infancy of art is only associated in their minds with the modern invention of the camera lucida: if you marvel at the immensity of an obelisk, they reduce it to a speck on a sheet of paper; if you wonder at the mechanism which elevated the hundred pillars of the portico at Carnac, the *camera* is brought to bear on the colonnade.

Our modern Egyptian travellers appear to have one motive for every journey, whether to Thebes or Memphis, and that is to make pictures; they have one idea, and that is irrevocably fixed on the camera lucida.

The devastation of three thousand years is before their face, the ravages of thirty centuries are written on the ruins, the conquests of as many tyrants are to be seen in their effects; the fury of the Persian, the zeal of the Christian, the fanaticism of the Turk, and the barbarity of the Arab are to be traced in the overthrow of every altar, and the mutilation of every statue: yet the moral of Theban desolation is thrown away upon them; they have eyes, but they look not through antiquity; they have ears, but they hearken not

to the philosophy of its history; they have hearts, but they conceive not the cause of the decay which has swallowed up the city, and left nothing but the altar and the pictured God behind.

How strange is it that nothing of Egyptian architecture should remain, but tombs and temples; that the despotism of theocracy should even triumph over time, and manifest the power of an ambitious priesthood over the energies of a deluded people.

How humiliating is it to gaze on the sculptured walls of the temple of *Gourna*, and to survey in every part the power and the littleness of man; the power which could elevate such prodigious structures, ornamented with porticos of polished granite, the smallest of whose pillars no modern mechanism could either raise or sculpture; and the littleness of a nation, which could bow its neck to an enslaving priesthood, and suffer the sacerdotal tyrants to trample on its genius, its energies, and intellect. To what other cause, but the fatal influence of priests over the political affairs of a nation, is the decadence of Egypt to be ascribed? To what other source is the degradation of the ancient religion to be traced,

but to the total corruption of the stall-fed emblems of theology? The simple rites of the early Egyptians required few priests, and these were the most virtuous and learned of the community: the worship of the Deity, under the figure of a warrior or a sage, (for such most probably was Osiris,) they were appointed to preside over, and to preserve the sacred science of the knowledge of creation from the profanation of the impious*. As the laws of Egypt permitted marriage between brother and sister, Isis was the wife and sister of Osiris, and was regarded as another emblem of the divinity. As the statue of the one was commonly surmounted with a globe, and the other with a crescent, some writers have considered that the earliest worship of the Egyptians and of all mankind was the adoration of the sun and moon: Dupius is the great advocate of this opinion, and La Pluche is its most strenuous opponent. The latter considers all the more

* It is the opinion of Mr. Salt, and two other individuals of great Egyptian erudition, that the grand secret of the ancient religion was "the knowledge of the creation;" that is to say, that the Egyptians had, whether by revelation or tradition, a more ancient and detailed account of the first history of man than any other people prior to the Jews.

recent divinities of Egypt to have been the emblems of cultivation. At all events the early religion was pure and simple, but when voluptuousness found its way within the precincts of the temple, theology became a trade: and in the time of Psammetichus the priests were more numerous than the soldiers; every species of religious fraud was practised, by which an offering could be wrung from the fools of easy faith. Herodotus describes the clergy as feasting on the sacrifices, and quaffing the sacred wine. Every plan was devised which could terrify the mind of man into submission to priestcraft; the images, which were only the emblems of the divinity, were converted into gods, and those animals whose peculiar qualities were considered as representations of the divine attributes, engrossed at last the veneration which was due to the divinity, of which they only were the type. The Devil had his temple at Dendera, the crocodile had his at Koum Ombos. The walls of the sacred buildings were covered with monstrous figures, and appalling scenes of human mutilation; and nothing was left undone to sink the nation in superstition, and to exalt the church.

How shocking is it to see the massacre of human beings made the subject of religious sculpture, in the interior of every temple; to observe, at the very entrance to the holy of holies, a hecatomb of human victims depicted on the walls: a hero towering above his fellow mortals, trampling on the necks of a prostrate multitude; a warrior holding a host of captives by the hair of the head, in the act of hewing them to pieces; a god, a little lower, smiling on the slaughter, and holding the key of immortality to the nose of the reeking butcher: these are the representations which the Egyptian priests considered best adapted to excite religious feelings, to illustrate divine love, and to deprecate divine wrath.

Good God! what miserable creatures we are; how vainly do we vaunt of our exalted reason! how little have men known of what is pleasing in thy sight; what monstrous ideas have not been formed of thy attributes; what streams of blood have not been shed upon the altar; what unhallowed sacrifices have not been offered up in the temple! Everywhere has blood been made the bond of union between earth and heaven, and everywhere has the mutilation of thy image been

made the business of devotion, and the pretext of hypocrisy!

But even where the delusion of Egyptian darkness does not prevail, where thy beneficence is acknowledged to be thy excelling attribute, where thy mercy is regarded as the soul of a divine morality, how often, alas! has the fury of fanaticism, the rage of persecution rendered the arena of thy temple a scene of bloodshed, where the religion of peace has suffered the profanation of being made the motive of Christian massacres. In what corner of the civilized globe has not the shadow of a distinction between sects inspired the Christian bosom with the spirit of the first murderer? and, even now, is not that spirit to be found triumphant in a portion of the most civilized nation in Christendom? and are not the wretched people panting with fury in their hearts and religion on their lips, to tear the vitals of each other?

If the pictured horrors of Egyptian temples have not led other travellers into similar reflections, it is, perhaps, because they have been more thorough antiquarians than I profess to be. The description of monuments is beyond my talent;

the impression they produce on me is all I pretend to give you: and if, in contemplating the ruins of this earliest seat of learning and of science, their splendid fragments should only have suggested a train of melancholy reflections, I nevertheless rejoice in having visited the spot, and look forward to the period of my departure with regret. I believe the impression which the sight of Thebes leaves on the reflecting mind is, like its own ruin,—indestructible. Magnitude, perhaps, takes a stronger hold of memory than even beauty; and, in my opinion, the magnificence of Egyptian architecture strikes the senses rather by the magnitude than the elegance of its proportions. I am aware that *Denon* was of a different opinion, and considered a cameo productive of as much effect as the largest temple: but the Egyptians had a better knowledge of the arts, and were content to give beauty to the one, and sublimity to the other; and so far as it was possible to combine grandeur with gracefulness, the Egyptians have succeeded to admiration. There are two colossal stucco figures at the entrance of one of the royal tombs, which Mr. Hay has just taken casts of, and never were such celestial tranquillity,

serenity, and softness expressed in any Grecian statue as beam in the Ethiopian features of these Egyptian figures: the eyes are elongated, like those of the great Sphynx, the eyelids half closed, the lips rather reverted, and the *tout ensemble* of the profile is, in a great degree, that of the modern Nubian.

In the Memnonium many such beautiful countenances of the divinities are mutilated, on every wall, and in many places covered with mud, by the early Christians, to make the trunks serve for representations of the saints and fathers. Perhaps such destruction in the temples of Upper Egypt, of every thing connected with Egyptian mythology, was more general than that practised by the Persians. Every temple was made a Christian church; the trough for the blood of the sacrifice served to contain the holy water, the monolythe receptacle for the sacred animal was converted into a tabernacle, the marble on which the victims were slain was turned into an altar, the statue of Osiris was changed to a representation of the Divinity, by substituting a globe for the Egyptian taw, and a triangle for the emblematic hook. The figures of Isis and the child Horus in her

arms, were easily made personifications of the Virgin and Child, the crescent on the head of Isis was converted into a halo, and the insignia of Horus required little alteration. Typhon answered for the devil well enough, with the appendage of a tail and the addition of a hoof, and a procession of Egyptian priests was transformed, with facility, into a company of the Apostles, by the simple obliteration of a few pagan ornaments. In the temples of Thebes and Dendera, I particularly noticed this singular transformation; it is not, perhaps, more surprising than the conversion of the statue of Jupiter into that of Saint Peter, in the Cathedral of Rome. To what purposes the statues of our warriors in St. Paul's, and of the saints in St. Peter's, may yet be converted, Heaven only knows; what worship they may be made to illustrate, in the revolution of ages, of empires, and of creeds, no man can foresee: but there is one degradation which no Englishman has to dread—the profanation of his churches in times to come; in three thousand years no British temple of the present period will be in existence; in three thousand years no

structure of the present age will probably be standing; in three thousand years the palaces of the Cheops of the North shall be "baseless fabrics," and the Chimeras of Nash shall leave no wreck behind to puzzle the conjectures of posterity; in three thousand years, perhaps the site of London may be a problem to the traveller, like that of Troy and Babylon; and the topography of Windsor as questionable as that of Memphis.

If there be any so nationally vain as to consider such events impossible, as to conceive that their country is exempt from the ruin which, in the common course of nature, has embraced all the nations of the earth, I may fail to convince him that England must one day fall; but I would refer him to the histories of every ancient nation, for the last three thousand years, to learn the fate of empires: and, if that did not subdue his vain glory, I would walk him through the desolate ruins I have visited; and, pointing out the vestiges of Rome and Byzantium, of Memphis and Heliopolis, of Babylon and of Thebes, and the utter nothing of the past, on the plains of Troy —I would ask him if these mouldering records of

antiquity did not denote the site of cities, vast as even that of London? I would fix him to the ring of national ruin, till his heart sickened with the mortality of empire; and I would demand of him if, three thousand years ago, the sepulchre of each city he beheld was not the scene of animation, of gaiety, and of glory?

If he considered legislative wisdom, or kingly virtue sufficient for the lasting preservation of kingdoms, I would lead him through the tombs of the Theban kings, and convince him that neither wisdom nor virtue had been able to prevent the barbarian, nor the antiquary from ravaging the coffins and the caves of Sesostris and Psammetichus.

Perhaps he might find the mummies of the greatest monarchs of antiquity, set up in galleries of the Louvre, to horrify the curious; or, perhaps, their royal humours had not resisted putrefaction, and they had festered in their gilded coffins, by a less revolting process than that by which the bodies of the million are decomposed.

I shall trespass no longer on your time, than in alluding to the age of Sesostris, whose tomb is the most splendid here, and which Larcher's

Chronology places one thousand three hundred and fifty-six years before our era; and to notice the similarity in the Egyptian and Chinese chronologies; Manetho's account, containing a catalogue of thirty Egyptian dynasties, during a series of one hundred and thirteen generations, and comprising the immense space of thirty-six thousand five hundred and twenty-five years; while the Chinese historians date the origin of their empire twenty-eight thousand years back.

Whether the revolution of the zodiac, or the difference between solar and lunar years accounts satisfactorily for the supposed errors of chronology it is hard to say; probably national vanity has much to do with the chronology of Eastern countries. But, certainly, the ruins of Thebes carry the mind very far back; and many hundreds of centuries are required to account for the elevation of such a city, and for its gradual decline: in the eloquent language of Denon, I may say:

" Dans le sanctuaire des arts et des sciences, combien d'époques se présentèrent à mon imagination! combien de siècles il a fallu pour amener une nation créatrice à de pareils résultats! à ce degré de perfection et de sublimité dans les arts!

combien d'autres siècles pour produire l'oubli de tant de choses! et ramener l'homme sur la même sol à l'état de nature où nous l'avons trouvé! jamais tant d' espace dans un seul point; jamais les pas du temps plus prononcés et mieux servis!"

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXIX.

TO THE COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON.

MY LADY, Thebes, Sept. 10, 1826.

SINCE the time of Lady Montagu few female travellers, if any, have followed in her steps; and of the few who were qualified to supply her glowing language and elegant description, Egypt, unfortunately, had never the advantage of their observations. It is for this reason that I once presumed to express my regret that your Ladyship had not visited this interesting country. I have been endeavouring, in the vicinity of Thebes, to gather information on the subject of ancient inhumation; and the result of my inquiries I address to your Ladyship, believing any subject connected with science cannot be devoid of interest, however appalling it may appear, under the lens of

modern refinement and sickly sensibility. I am aware that where "the feebler faint" the energetic feel, and that sensibility, like other qualities, seeks an asylum on the lips when it has been banished from the heart. To understand the reason of embalming dead bodies, and bestowing them in costly sepulchres, it is necessary to refer to the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, which opinion the Egyptians held in common with the Hindoos. The religions of both, in all probability, had one common origin. They believed in the same two principles of good and evil. The gods of the Egyptians little differed from those of the Hindoos; the *Osiris* of the former, the *Isis*, the *Thoth*, the *Horus*, and the *Anubis* were not very different in their attributes from the *Brahma*, the *Bistnu*, the *Chrishna*, the *Seeb*, and the *Indra* of the Hindoos. The ten incarnations of Brahma, the *Castes* coming from his four members, viz. mouth, arms, stomach, and feet, are only other versions of the various appearances of Osiris, and the dispersion of his scattered members over the earth.

That both people originally believed in one

true God*, I think is evident, from the inscriptions found in both countries. A temple of Sais had this description of the Egyptian deity: "I am all that has existed, does exist, and ever shall exist; and my veil no mortal hath yet uncovered."

In the *Hindoo Shaster* the attributes of one God are thus enumerated in these sublime words: "The Supreme Being exists unseen, preeminent; that which is and must remain. He is the Almighty God, the prime Creator, the mansion of the world, the incorruptible Being distinguished from all transient things, the ancient *Pooros*, the supreme supporter of the universe, and by whom the universe is spread abroad. He is immaterial, therefore above all conception. He is invisible, and therefore can have no form; and from what we behold of his works, we may conclude that he is eternal! omnipresent! omnipotent! omniscient! and infinite in glory!"

The Egyptian process of embalming, however,

* Plutarch says, that the people of the Thebais worshipped only the immortal God under the name of Ptha: and, on Franklin's authority, the word made use of by the modern Copts to signify the Deity is Ptha.

was unknown in India; indeed it could be practised in no other country but in Egypt, where there was no dampness or moisture to counteract the antiseptic process. We have good reason to know it was not in general use among the Jews, though that people borrowed the fashion of their sepulchres from the Egyptians. In Jerusalem, as in Thebes, the tombs are cut in the sides of the mountains; there are the same galleries, charnels, and sarcophagi; and some of the same gaudy paintings are still to be found in a Jewish tomb adjoining the supposed sepulchre of *Absalom*. In Wady El Mousa, the tomb of Aaron, differs in nothing from one of the tombs at Gourna. Burckhardt mentions the splendour of this sepulchre, and the number of stone coffins sunk in the floor; but neither in the tomb of *Aaron*, nor in the sepulchre of the kings in Jerusalem, has a single mummy been found, nor any vestige of the balsamic preparations.

Had the climate of other eastern countries admitted of embalming, most probably that process would have been adopted; but, as I have said before, it was the dryness of the air of Upper Egypt only which mainly tended to prevent de-

composition. In Lower Egypt, the mummies go to pieces on exposure to external air; and in Alexandria, where the air is excessively moist, I observed several mummies melt away, in a damp magazine where I kept them, and decomposition take place after an exposure of forty hours to the humid atmosphere, though the same bodies had resisted corruption in a dry air for perhaps forty centuries. In some churchyards in Europe, where the soil is calcareous, bodies are preserved for centuries.

In Toulouse, I saw several quite perfect after a lapse of one hundred and eighty years; and in the vaults of St. Michael's Church, in Dublin, I remember being shown the corpse of the unfortunate Henry Shears, who was hanged in 1798, and which, for preservation, rivalled any Egyptian mummy: the desiccating air of this vault does all that embalming can accomplish.—Shakspeare was quite right in making water a sad "decayer of the dead body:" though it may be permitted to doubt the truth of the tanner's antiseptic nature*. The honours of a splendid

* It appears, by recent observation, that operative tanners are never the victims of pulmonary consumption. In the

burial, which in the early days of Egypt were only bestowed on the virtuous citizen, or beneficent monarch, rendered every man desirous of deserving them. Both Jews and Egyptians excluded their bad kings from the sepulchre of their fathers. The Grecian fable of the judgment of Minos and Rhadamanthus had its origin in the funeral process of the Egyptians. The judges accompanied the corpse in a boat across the lake Mœris, and on the other side of it decided on the just right of the remains to honourable interment. The pilot, who steered the boat, was called Charon, in the Egyptian tongue; and at Thebes, it was customary in evidence of this inquest, to accompany the corpse across the Nile, with a small figure of a boat, which in the funeral processions, painted on the tombs, is invariably seen carried after the body. The only one of these boats which has ever been found in Thebes, I was fortunate enough to see a few days after its discovery. It was found by an Arab and purchased by Mr. Salt's agent. It is a complete

West Med. Soc. it was stated by a physician, that after six years' research, he never found one instance of a tanner's dying of tubercular phthisis.

model in wood of an ancient boat, about three feet long, in excellent preservation, and the painting is as fresh as if it had been just laid on: it differs little in construction from the modern *germ* of the Arabs; the same spars for attaching the lateen sail, but the tiller is of another form, and its movements are connected with a wheel: in the centre there is a representation of a mummy, surrounded by mourners, and the workmanship altogether is surprising. The Libyan mountain, on the north west side of Thebes, contains the tombs; they perforate the mountain from top to bottom; the lowest are the most highly finished; these are inhabited by the Arabs, about three hundred of whom miserably exist in these sepulchres of pride. The staple commodity of Gourna consists in mummies: the Arabs find it easier to live by selling dead men, than by the toil of husbandry. In the sale of mummies, I discovered such frauds, that I have no hesitation in saying, in all the cabinets of Europe, there are not probably twenty mummies in the same coffins in which they were originally deposited.

I attended an old inhabitant of a tomb for several days; he had a bad fever, of which his son

had died a few days before my arrival. I had the good fortune to cure this old troglodyte, and his gratitude was unbounded. I was in the habit of sitting with him daily, on my return from my researches in the tombs. His dwelling was in the most spacious chamber of a superb sepulchre*, the walls were covered with ancient paintings, the roof was supported by four magnificent pillars, his divan was formed of an inverted coffin, and the lamp, which feebly illumined this gloomy chamber, was made of the cover of an alabaster vase. Various antique utensils furnished his cupboard, and the screen which separated the women's alcove from the common chamber, was formed principally of the linen cloth torn from the mummies. It was with great difficulty I could prevail on him to let me visit the interior of the tomb; I did so, however, on the condition of not telling any thing of what I saw to the

* In the paintings of this chamber, I observed five different sorts of musical instruments; jugglers were depicted in the act of swallowing fire, dancing on ropes, standing on their heads; asses were rearing on their hind legs, the cross accurately painted on their backs; women were dancing precisely like the modern Arab *alme*; and only six primitive colours were employed in the representations of all these objects.

Franks at Gourna, and, to my utter surprise, the first thing I observed, at the extremity of the gallery was a manufacture of mummies. Three beautiful mummy cases were laid open, an ordinary mummy was placed in the last, the original one having been previously pillaged; and, what convinced me of the fraud was several new wooden pegs lying on the cover of the large case, undoubtedly intended as substitutes to the old ones, which had been broken in bursting open the external case. There are generally three cases, and the nails which join them are made of hard wood. I asked no questions, I knew it would be useless, but my eye was inquisitive for the few moments I remained, and some red paint in a coffee-cup beside the coffins, left me no doubt of the justice of my first suspicion.

I proceeded through a narrow passage into another cave, which was literally crammed with mummies, placed in horizontal layers, as they had been, in all probability, deposited some thousands of years ago. Not one was upright, as Herodotus describes them to have been; and, indeed, in all the sepulchres I have been, I never found a mummy in a standing posture; the great

proof of this fallacy is that, in the tombs of the kings, each sarcophagus is placed on its bottom, and not on end. But what astonished me in the tomb of my old friend, the troglodyte, far more than the folly of the Egyptians or the skill of the embalmers, was the indifference of the little children of the old man's son to the horrors of the place: four of them, the eldest not exceeding eight years of age, had crawled after me through every gloomy passage; and now, in the chamber where the dreariness of the scene and the sickening sight of these cadaverous mummies made me shudder, they sat on the broken coffins, pulling about the rigid arms of the dead bodies, and playing with the gilded fingers of one mummy which had evidently been dragged from a coffin. Not a particle of fear had these little troglodytes; and why, indeed, should they? they were born in a sepulchre, they were accustomed to death, their little eyes saw less of living men than of livid corpses: if their mother wished to frighten them, she spoke not of graves and hobgoblins, she talked to them of Christians; she could not terrify their souls with objects which were always within their sight, and she could hardly shut them up in a much

darker room than that in which they first saw the lamp which "made darkness visible" around them.

Had they been punished with a few minutes confinement, in the deepest gallery of the tomb, the apparition of a living *Frank* would have haunted their imaginations, but the ghost of a dead man would never have caused an apprehension. When my Nubian servant saw the little knaves jowl the head (perhaps of some Egyptian philosopher) as they carried it out for me, he looked on them with disgust, and called them *Caffres*. I could not get him to lay his finger on a mummy.

These urchins at first fled at my approach, as all the children of Thebes do when they see a Frank, but by degrees they got accustomed to me. I found that their avarice, young as they were, was stronger than their fears; and one piastre after another made them prefer me at last to the *Shitan*, whose satanic image, they had been taught, was impressed on every Christian form.

If there were any proof wanting, that fear is the result of infantile education, I think this fact would be sufficient to make it manifest. "Fear," says Locke, "is an uneasiness of the mind upon the thought of future evil likely to befall us:"

but this uneasiness comes from without, and, in early life, originates in the tales of the nursery.

I purchased three mummies from my old friend, in excellent preservation, illustrating the three distinct modes of embalming. I paid for one, in a coffin, thirty piastres, fifteen for another, and for a small female one, beautifully preserved, eight; in all, about sixteen shillings of our money. Had I purchased these mummies from either of the Frank agents here, of Mr. D'A., or of Mr. S., I should have paid, at least, from ten to fifteen pounds. I had them conveyed at night to my boat, to prevent Mr. S.'s man from seeing them, in whose house I was then stopping with Mr. H. and Mr. S.; the latter gentleman I had the pleasure of first meeting at your ladyship's house, and it is somewhat strange that we should renew our acquaintance in the sepulchres of Thebes. Mr. Hay has been for some years in Upper Egypt, particularly in Thebes, and has made the most valuable collection of designs of the monuments of Thebes which is to be met with.

Mr. Bonomie, a Roman artist, is also here, and is indefatigable in his labours. He is obliging

enough to take some of the weight of medical practice off my hands; for the Arabs are flocking in for my advice from every part of the country.

A Copt came to me from a village fifteen miles distant, who had been a cripple from his boyhood, to request I would restore him to the use of his limbs. I told him it was impossible; but he smiled at the word, and said, "Oh hakkim! I know very well if you wished to heal me, you could do it readily:"—what is one to say to such people? I could not help feeling flattered by such confidence; but the poor man left *Gourna*, notwithstanding, in two days' time; "he took up his bed," but he did not walk.

I employed five hours a day in examining the tombs*. The embalming of the mummies was a

* The great principle of embalming is the exclusion of the external air; and it is very singular, that long before the subject of Egyptian embalming was known to me, I had hit upon the same principle of preserving the dead body. In 1823 I accompanied Mr. B—— from Naples, by sea, for London; a long and perilous voyage, during which our provisions were expended; and which was attended with such privations that my poor companion died thirty days previous to our arrival at Plymouth. I thought his friends would be glad to have his remains brought home; but there was nothing to preserve them, neither spirits nor spices. After thinking on every

subject which occupied my attention a good deal; and I had a strong hope that the accurate examination of mummy heads, on craniological principles, and the comparing them with those of the Copts and Nubians, might throw much light on the question of the descendants of the Egyptians.

I have made a collection of the skulls of the various inhabitants of Egypt, Turks, Jews, Copts, Arabs, and Greeks, and each has its decided national peculiarities*.

In the course of my researches in the tombs, I encountered some little peril and a great deal of fatigue: sometimes I have missed my way in the intricate passages, and have wandered for an hour in search of the exit, treading, at every step, on my fellow creatures' loathsome bodies, and

substitute, I determined at last on employing common tar. I removed the intestines, applied the tar internally and externally, and then enveloped the body in a tarred sheet: by this process the air was completely excluded, and I was enabled to bring home the body, after a very long voyage. We were quite destitute of provisions when we arrived at Plymouth, after a voyage of seventy-two days.

* I brought home three of these heads, which I presented to Mr. Brodie: they are now in that gentleman's museum, and illustrate clearly the vast difference in the form of the heads of the various inhabitants of Egypt.

crushing the fragile forms which so much pains had been taken to preserve. The effluvia was often so intolerable as to threaten suffocation; the air was loaded with the particles of powdered balsam, and the bitterness of these particles was so intense, that sometimes my throat has been excoriated by them; but this effect I am far from regretting, it has been the means of making me acquainted with one of the component parts of the balsam employed in preserving the mummies, namely, powdered colocynth, vulgarly called bitter apple: this, I have ascertained by subsequent analysis, forms a very large proportion of the balsam. The resin being insoluble in water, I thought I might get an infusion of colocynth (if colocynth indeed existed in it), by pouring a quart of water on four ounces of the coarse powdered balsam; I then made a strong infusion of powdered colocynth, and found the taste was precisely the same as that of the balsam. I also discovered that colocynth was largely employed in Upper Egypt, in the form of powder, for destroying vermin in clothes, presses, and storerooms; and that the ostrich feathers which are sent to Lower Egypt are sprinkled with pow-

dered colocynth as they are packed. Future investigation, I have no doubt, will confirm this fact; and every discovery, however trifling, is a step towards the attainment of Egyptian knowledge, in which we are now so lamentably deficient.

The three methods of embalming described by Herodotus, do not comprise any thing like the number of processes employed*. In the

* The most sumptuous sort of embalming, Herodotus says, cost a silver talent (one hundred and thirty-seven pounds ten shillings of our money). The brains were extracted through the nostrils, the intestines through an aperture in the side; the abdomen was then washed with palm wine, and powdered myrrh, cassia, and other aromatics sprinkled over it: the body was then left for seventy days, to become dry, natron being used to promote desiccation; after seventy days the body was swathed with gummed linen, which gum the Egyptians used instead of glue; the mummy was then placed in one or more coffins according to the condition of the deceased. The poorer classes were thus embalmed: no incision nor extraction of the intestines was practised, but injections of an infusion composed of oil of cedar was used; the mummy was then dried for several days; the oil of cedar corroded the intestines, and the natron left nothing but the skin and bones.

The third mode consisted in simply using certain purgative drugs, drying the body for the customary time, and then, without swathing it, giving it to the friends, who buried it without a coffin.

head of a mummy of a superior kind, I found a quality of balsam, different from any described by him or any other author: in colour and transparency it was not to be distinguished from pink topaz; it burned with a beautiful clear flame, without leaving any residue, and emitted a very fragrant odour, in which the smell of cinnamon predominated; in other heads of the same class, I found the skull crammed with fine linen, which must have been introduced through the nose, and the brains extracted through the same channel. In the heart of another mummy I found about three drachms of pure nitre, which must have been injected through the blood vessels, for the heart was entire.

The antiseptic process of Brookes, for preserving subjects for dissection, was an injection of a solution of nitre: was this an accidental discovery of Brookes? or had the Egyptians some rude conception of the circulation? That the substance I found was nitre was proved, in the presence of Mr. Bonomie, by the crackling noise it made on throwing it into the fire, and by the peculiarity of its taste. I opened the heads

of fifty mummies during my stay here, to ascertain the contents of the cranium, and the truth of Herodotus's assertion relative to the extraordinary thickness of the Egyptian skull; but I discovered it was a fable; there was not a line of difference in the thickness of a mummy and a European head; in the shape there was much: but, at all events, I was convinced that, with the age of the world, man suffered no diminution in size; and that his stature, three thousand years ago, was not an inch more than it now is.

Another peculiarity, ascribed by Herodotus to the Egyptians, was their negro appearance; "they had black skins and short curly hair," he says, "like the Colchians:" this is to be taken with some grains of allowance. I believe, from all the observations I was able to make, that the ancient Egyptians had *swarthy complexions and wiry hair*, not like the negroes, but like the modern Nubians. On several female heads I found long flowing hair: I took away the head of one whose hair measured sixteen inches; and also a male head, whose beard measured three. But most of the skulls had no hair at all:

whether this was owing to the custom of shaving the head, or that the embalmers cut it away, it is hard to say.

The hands of many were dyed with the juice of the *henna*, as is the custom of the Arabs; the fingers, toes, lips, and eyes of others were gilt. The balls of the eyes were invariably wanting; in some of the costly mummies enamelled glass eyes were substituted, and were admirably executed: I was fortunate enough to procure one head with them. I observed the nails were generally very long: we know that the nails grow for some time after death; perhaps their length in the mummies might be accounted for by a similar growth.

The Arabs make use of mummy powder for a medicine; they mix it with butter, and give this preparation the name of *Mantey*. It is esteemed a sovereign remedy for internal and external ulcers, and also finds a place in the Italian Pharmacopœias. After measuring a vast number of mummy heads, in order to ascertain what modern skulls they most resembled, I finally measured the heads of twelve adult mummies,

twelve Copts, and twelve Nubians, and the following table gives the result:

MUMMY HEADS, DIVESTED OF INTEGUMENTS.

	Length of the Head, from the root of the nose to the occipital tubercle.	*Breadth round the Head, across the forehead, and above the occipital tubercle.*
	Inches.	Inches.
1 head	12½	20
2 ditto	12½	20
3 ditto	13	20½
4 ditto	12	20¼
5 ditto	13	21
6 ditto	12½	19¾
7 ditto	12	20
8 ditto	12¾	20½
9 ditto	13	21
10 ditto	12	20¼
11 ditto	12¼	21
12 ditto	12¾	20½

HEADS OF LIVING COPTS, DIVESTED OF HAIR.

1 head	14	23
2 ditto	14½	22
3 ditto	13¾	22½
4 ditto	13	22¾
5 ditto	14	21
6 ditto	14½	22½
7 ditto	14¾	22¼
8 ditto	14	24
9 ditto	14½	23

HEADS OF LIVING COPTS, DIVESTED OF HAIR,

(Continued).

	Length of the Head, from the root of the nose to the occipital tubercle.	*Breadth round the Head, across the forehead, and above the occipital tubercle.*
	Inches.	Inches.
10 head	14½	22
11 ditto	14½	22
12 ditto	14¾	21½

HEADS OF LIVING NUBIANS, DIVESTED OF HAIR.

1 head	13	20½
2 ditto	13½	20
3 ditto	13¾	21
4 ditto	13	19
5 ditto	14	21
6 ditto	12½	20½
7 ditto	12¾	20½
8 ditto	13	20¾
9 ditto	12¾	20
10 ditto	13	20½
11 ditto	13½	19
12 ditto	13¼	20¼

From this table it is evident that there is no affinity between the head of the Egyptian mummy and that of the Copt; but allowing, in all the measurements, three quarters of an inch for the difference of the scalp on the Nubian head, it follows that the measurement of the latter cor-

responds with that of the mummy head in every particular. But the great distinction between the mummy and Copt, in a line drawn right across the orbits, from one external angle of the eye to that of the other, is in the greater space of the Copt across the eyes, in every skull that I measured, the line across the orbits of the Copt being half an inch longer than in the same line of the mummy. In this respect, likewise, the Nubian skull differed nothing from the latter.

The old Egyptian head is of so peculiar a form that it would be impossible to confound it with the Turkish, Grecian, or Arabic head. Of all the heads I examined in the Levant, the Greek head was the most irregular and ill shaped; the facial part was generally excellent, but the cerebral cover was very rarely of an even and regular shape.

The old Egyptian skull is extremely narrow across the forehead, and of an oblong shape anteriorly. I suppose I must have seen several thousands of mummy heads, but I never found one with a broad expanded forehead. If I were to speak in phrenological terms of the old Egyptian head, I would say, generally, that those

anterior organs, which mark the seat of the reasoning powers, were not developed: in it vanity, veneration, cautiousness, and habitativeness were well marked; but wit, memory, order, duration, causalty, murder, and (I am obliged to add, however it may seem to tell against phrenology), constructiveness were not perceptible.

I consider the Egyptian head to be less capacious than that of the Copt: and, if it be true that the faculties of men are determined by the volume of the brain, in relation to the size of the body, as physiologists assert, it is saying little for the intelligence of the Egyptians, to suppose the superiority of Coptic intellect. Indeed, Niebuhr considered the moral qualities of both to be much the same. The Egyptians, he says, "were always a melancholy, conceited, and superstitious race;" exactly what phrenology points out; and the Copts, he imagined, ". did little credit to the sovereigns of Egypt, from their uncouth figure, stupidity, ignorance, and wretchedness." But, *Niebuhr*, like all other travellers, in my opinion, erred in considering the Copts to be the great body of the descendants of the Egyptians. In all probability, they were a colony in Lower Egypt,

in the time of the Egyptians, and probably spoke their language; but they could not have been of the true Egyptian race.

Herodotus, whose *own* observations are deemed veracious, describes the old Egyptians, among whom he was residing, as a people of black skins, and short woolly hair; the Copts have neither one nor the other; and above all, what, in my opinion, is the strongest of all evidence on the subject, is the utter dissimilarity in the form of the heads of both people. Customs change in the lapse of ages, and confound castes, but nature never varies in the formation of mankind, and the peculiarities of national craniology are written in the same characters, century after century.

It is among the Nubians we are to search for the true descendants of the Egyptians; a swarthy race, with wiry hair; surpassing, in the beauty of their slender forms, all the people of the East; living on the confines of Egypt, where, probably, their ancestors had been driven by the Persians; and possessing a dialect somewhat mixed with Arabic, but which, I have observed, no Arab understands. The oral language of the Egyptians may, for aught the most learned linguists know to

the contrary, exist in this dialect, with as much probability as in the Coptic.

Mr. Salt, who is learned in Eastern languages, and also in hieroglyphics, has acknowledged to me, that hardly any thing is known here of the Coptic language; he sought all over Egypt for information from their priests, but he found only one amongst them who affected to know the meaning of the Coptic words in their religious books. Their liturgy is still written in modern Coptic, but no one understands it. In every book I have seen, there is a translation, in Arabic, on the same side.

The Ptolemies changed the language of the Copts, and substituted Greek; since that period, the modern Coptic, as it is found in their religious books, is a *mélange* of the old, with many Greek and Arabic words; this I discovered by making one of their priests read to me a missal of theirs, which I purchased at Negadè.

Mr. Salt begged of me to inquire after a Copt, in Thebes, who had formerly been his servant, but who had left him and returned to his native village, to become a priest. In case he had not entered into holy orders, I was to bring him down

to Cairo with me, to be installed in his old office of valet de chambre: his great honesty was the quality for which Mr. Salt now desired to re-engage him.

After a great many fruitless inquiries, I found Mr. Abdriman, at last, living in a sepulchre at Gourna. I discovered, on entering the cave, a pallid wretch, poring over a huge volume; a greasy turban on his head, and an Arab blanket on his shoulders: beside him was a fat old man, enveloped in a blue garment, which apparently had not been renovated for half a century, a huge black turban on the back of his head, and a long pipe in his mouth; this person was the Bishop.

The right reverend gentleman said to me, in a gruff voice, "*Foddha*," "Sit down," and made room for me beside him on the dirty mat. He asked me if I was a Christian—an English Christian? and if I wanted to buy antiquities? I answered these religious and commercial inquiries to his satisfaction. He pulled out a long purse, which contained a rosary, and some Spanish dollars, and, in the bottom, a *scarabeus*, which he offered me for sale. I dared not ask the price, lest I should offend him: so I handed

it back to him: "What," said he, "is it not worth twenty dollars between Christians?"

"Between Christians, please your reverence," said I, "perhaps the *scarabeus* is worth that sum; but between an Arab and a Frank it is worth about ten piastres."

"Ten piastres!" cried the enraged Bishop, "*Wallah!* by God! it cost me thirty! but as you are a *hakkim*—and a *hakkim* to my friend, the Consul *Saul*, why, you may have it for forty piastres."

"Twelve, please your reverence," I replied, "not a paras more can I afford for it."

"Take it," said he, at last: "you are harder to deal with than a *Yahudi*," (a Jew); and so I got the *scarabeus*, for which his grace had the Coptic conscience to demand five pounds of our money, for about three shillings.

I hardly knew how to broach my business in the presence of the Bishop: if the man had really become a priest, it would be so very awkward to ask him to return to his former service. However, I summoned courage, and explained to him the nature of my visit; he shut his book, and looked at the Bishop, as if for advice.

"Tell *Saul*," said his reverence, in a very indignant tone, "that Abdriman has nearly completed his religious studies, and is about to enter the mother church; and therefore, that if he got a thousand piastres a year, instead of a hundred, he could not go."

I made a great many apologies, and took my leave; but I had hardly got home, when his mother and sister presented themselves at the door, kissed my hand very respectfully, and besought me to prevail, if possible, on Abdriman to renounce the church, and go with me to his old master. "He will earn ten times more money at service," said his amiable mother, "than he possibly can do in the church: besides, there are so many priests there is not bread for one half of them! He spends," she continued, "every paras of our earning on old books, and he will not work a stroke."

The fellow looked like a lazy dog; but I scrupled, however, robbing the church of him. The woman kissed my hand over and over, and begged of me to take him away. I consented to speak to him on the subject. I went next day, and was fortunate enough to find him without the

Bishop. I said nothing about his vocation; but I put one plain question to him: "Where did he feed best—in Mr. Salt's kitchen or in the Bishop's house?" This staggered him; the zeal of the theologian was merged for an instant in the earthly feelings of the Copt: he made no reply, but he passed his hand over his meager cheeks. I had one of those small French mirrors in my pocket, which magnifies the features on one side and diminishes them on the other: I was in the habit of astonishing the Arabs with what appeared to them its miraculous effect; and with this I determined to aid my argument in persuading my Copt to eat the bread of industry and honesty.

While the remembrance of the fleshpots of Lower Egypt was passing over his mind; while the recollection of the Consul's larder was rising in his bosom; and while, like Pythagoras, he reflected on beans with horror, and thought of their daily recurrence at the Bishop's table with disgust; I said to him, "I fear, my friend, you fast too much; there is famine in your countenance;" and presenting to him the diminishing surface of the little mirror, I bid him look on his

meager features. He saw his countenance reduced to the size of a walnut. Never shall I forget his look of horror; I hardly could preserve my gravity; so I took my leave. Next day I saw nothing of him; but the third morning, at the dawn, he was at my bedside; he had a bundle of books in one hand, and some rags in the other. "I am ready for Cairo," said he; "but ah, if the Bishop should meet me!" I wanted him to remain till I came back to Thebes from Nubia. "No, no," he exclaimed, "I would not face the Bishop for a million of piastres!"

In a couple of days I purpose setting out for Nubia; perhaps, on my return, I may be able to give your Ladyship some more interesting information than this letter contains; in the meantime,

I have the honour to be

Your Ladyship's obedient Servant,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXX.

TO M. MONTEFIORE, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Damietta, April 15, 1827.

THOUGH the distance from Thebes to Assouan, the last town in Egypt, is only one hundred and seventy-five miles, our voyage occupied seven days. The first remarkable town we visited was *Esnèh*, the ancient *Latopolis*, forty miles from Thebes: here we found the ruins of a splendid temple, whose portico is reckoned the finest specimen of Egyptian architecture. Denon considered the style of this monument as the purest he had seen in Egypt. The capitals are all different, and the diversity appears to increase the beauty of the whole.

On the ceiling of the portico there are the remains of a zodiac, which the French *Savans* calculated gave an antiquity to the building of six

thousand years. Subsequent investigation has, however, invalidated this assertion of the French astronomers.

The walls of *Elethias*, which are all that remain, except the ruins of a small peripteral temple, are only a few hours distant from Esnèh. The walls enclose a space of three hundred and fifteen toises; their solidity is remarkable, and accounts for their surviving the city they were intended to defend. The adjoining mountain contains a number of sepulchres, the paintings on whose walls are extremely curious. Funeral processions are represented, in which women dance, and play several instruments, viz. ill shaped lyres and double pipes, precisely similar to those which the Arabs have now in use.

The various processes of agriculture are likewise represented, ploughs are drawn by men as well as by oxen; the sickle, whose use is now unknown in this neighbourhood, is seen; in short, the mode of living and of cultivating the soil of the ancient Egyptians, is to be learned in the tombs of Elethias, in as distinct a manner as the usages of the people of *Pompeii* are to be traced on the walls of their ancient houses.

At *Edfou*, which is about two and forty miles from *Esnèh*, we stopped a day to visit its celebrated temple. The situation of Edfou, the ancient Apollinopolis Magna, is beautiful; but the majesty of the finest temple in Egypt is insulted by a horde of filthy Arabs, who have made their miserable village on the roof, and who have blocked up the sanctuary with a dunghill: part of the splendid portico is converted into a stable, and the whole of the interior is so filled up with rubbish that it is deemed impossible to enter. An old man, to whom I gave some medecine, informed me there was a secret passage under ground, which no Frank was made acquainted with, because hidden treasures were deposited there! I of course became deeply interested in the health of my old gentleman and of all his family; and in return for my courtesy, he consented to show me the passage, provided I carried none of the hidden gold away. Considerably below the surface of the adjoining buildings he pointed out to me a chink in an old wall, which he told me I should creep through on my hands and feet; the aperture was not two feet and a half high, and scarcely

three feet and a half broad; my companion had the courage to enter first, thrusting in a lamp before him, I followed, and after me the son of the old man crept also; the passage was so narrow, that my mouth and nose were sometimes completely buried in the dust, and I was nearly suffocated. After proceeding about ten yards in utter darkness the heat became excessive, breathing was laborious, the perspiration poured down my face, and I would have given the world to have got out; but my companion, whose person I could not distinguish, though his voice was audible, called out to me to crawl a few feet farther, and that I should find plenty of space. I joined him at length, and had the inexpressible satisfaction of standing once more on my feet, commiserating, for the first time in my life, the unfortunate serpent, who has to perambulate on his belly till doomsday. We found ourselves in a splendid apartment of great magnitude, adorned with sacred paintings and hieroglyphics; several rows of pillars supported the painted ceiling, and the plynth of the capitals I found by measurement exceeded that of the columns at *Esnèh*.

We were in the interior of the sanctuary of the temple; the exterior of which is encumbered with rubbish, fully three fourths of its height. The magnificence of this chamber exceeds that of any other temple in Egypt, not excepting *Dendera*. There are several doors, but they are blocked up with rubbish, so that we were forced to return by the same narrow chink through which we entered. Before we left the interior, I observed many animals represented which I had not seen elsewhere; among the rest one which appeared to me to be meant for the hippopotamus. We could not remain half as long as we desired; the fatigue of our entry, and the clouds of dust which almost prevented breathing, had excited an intolerable thirst, and all the antiquities in the world were nothing in comparison with the speedy prospect of getting a draught of cold water. Hamilton, I believe, attempted to get through this passage, but could not succeed; Belzoni, I have since discovered, made a similar attempt, and failed also. On the exterior of the vestibule I noticed a small figure of Harpocrates seated on a lotus, with his forefinger on his mouth, in the act of enjoining silence.

The propylons of this edifice are considered the largest in Egypt; and this temple is the only one I have seen which is surrounded like a fortress, by a wall of about six feet in thickness, and twenty in height. There is a smaller temple here, called the Typhonium, from its being supposed to have been dedicated to Typhon, the devil of the Egyptians: the figure of this multiform personage is represented on the capitals, neither encumbered with hoofs nor horns, but endowed with a most inordinate abdomen, and apparently possessed of the most amorous propensities. In one of the sculptures the hippopotamus is to be seen; which animal, as well as the crocodile, seems to have been an emblem of the evil principle.

On our return to our boat, we had the pleasure of meeting an English traveller, Mr. Lane, who had been at Edfou, taking drawings of the temple, for some days; he was greatly surprised to hear of our subterraneous visit to the interior of the temple, as he had not been informed of any such entrance by the guides; he begged of me to conduct him to the passage, and this I did, after dark, when we had least reason to fear a surprisal by the Arabs. We took candles, and some jars of

water with us, and proceeded to the spot; we left our servants, well armed, at the mouth of the aperture to prevent danger; for, had we not done so, we should have been subjected to no little annoyance from the natives.

We were dogged, however, by three or four fellows, just as we were about to enter, so we had no alternative but to make them acquainted with our intentions, and to promise them a present if they acted as our guides; only one had the courage to consent to enter, the others agreed to watch for us outside.

We had so much enlarged the passage, by our first entry, that we now got in with considerably less difficulty. After remaining in the interior for about an hour, we hastened to return; but as I first advanced, on all fours, I heard high words without, a loud threat that we never should come out without paying a large sum to the people of the fortress, for so they call the temple; I listened in silence, my reflections were any thing but pleasing; the prospect of being immured in that horrid place, or of having my head broke, if I advanced it through the chink, were no very agreeable anticipations: at last I resolved to advance slowly be-

fore my companions, and to emerge in silence, but with all the swiftness possible. I accordingly darted my body through the aperture, with all the force I could exert in so constrained a posture, and was soon in the midst of the Arabs, before they were aware of my intention: they offered me no violence; on the contrary, they assisted me to rise; I took my station by the aperture, and my companions came out in safety.

The Arabs now talked of nothing but the treasures we had found; a great number of them had collected to see what we came by night to take away; and, finally, it was only by giving a *backsheesh* to half a dozen of them that we were enabled to get away.

Fifty miles from Edfou, we encountered the magnificent ruins of *Koum Ombos;*—they have been accurately described by Hamilton, one error only excepted, which indeed pervades his book, though it has been, perhaps, unnoticed by others; and that is, the aspect of the portico, wherever it is written East should be West, and *vice versa.*

The large temple was dedicated to the worship of the crocodile; and it is singular enough, offer-

ings here are not only made to the evil principle, but also to the beneficent one, whose figures are in close contact, as if the Egyptians had seen the world so divided between villany and virtue, that they hardly knew (in their ignorance of the true religion) which to worship first.

The small temple on the declivity of the hill was consecrated to Isis: her head is represented on the capitals; but the ornaments and paintings of this temple are far inferior to those of the other.

From Koum Ombos to Assouan, the ancient *Syenè*, the distance is thirty-five miles. We passed several desolate villages, which our Arabs informed us were ravaged by Ibrahim Pacha, in his progress to and from Arabia, when he went against the *Wahabees*. His amusement, they said, in passing along these banks, was firing at the *fellahs* on the shore.

I conceived it almost impossible that the conduct of even a Turkish despot could have been so atrocious; but I reasoned like a European. In Turkish provinces the breast of the people is the sheath of every ruffian's sword who calls himself a

soldier. I saw two maimed wretches near Negadè, who had been sniped by this three-tailed sportsman; and between Thebes and Assouan I saw another individual, who bore the mark of his unerring aim*. Yet this is the hero to whom the Franks of Egypt some years ago decreed the honours of a public triumph, and erected a temporary pillar to his fame in the public square of Alexandria, whereon his name was inscribed as

* I have had elsewhere occasion to remark, that nothing but adversity teaches a Turk the folly of fanaticism and the impolicy of ferocity. Up to the period of the battle of Navarino, the barbarity of Ibrahim was almost unparalleled. Since that "untoward event," his conduct has undergone a marked change. Sir E. Codrington has mainly contributed to his *civilisation*. He no longer expresses his contempt of Christian countries and their usages; on the contrary, his great ambition now is, to be acquainted with every thing that is English, and to introduce into Egypt the comforts and even the luxuries of this country. I have lately seen an order from him to the house of Messrs. Briggs, for a splendid tea and dinner service of English china, for a silver tea-tray, knives, forks, &c.; but what showed a greater desire for improvement was, a request to have an English gardener sent out to him; one well acquainted with botany, &c. Mr. S. B. has fulfilled his orders. Any improvement that has taken place in the commerce of Egypt is due to the counsels of Mr. B.

the rival of all the heroes of antiquity, and his victories over the miserable Arabs magnified into splendid conquests. And all this contemptible adulation was for a few cargoes of beans on credit, which "his Highness" granted, making use of this sublime expression: "*I would rather have enjoyed this pleasure, than gained twenty-five thousand piastres by a bargain in grain.*"

We stopped for some hours at the beautiful island of *Elephantina*, which is immediately opposite Assouan. Its verdure and fertility certainly exceeded that of the districts through which we passed; but to us, though it appeared an earthly Paradise, in England its gardens would be thought very little of, and their condition would have reflected disgrace on the possessors, though here their cultivation was highly honourable to the taste and industry of the inhabitants. What folly is it to make the taste or the morality of our own country the standard of any other's. What is considered beauty in one region is deemed deformity in another. In the two following tables, I think, I have stated this national phenomenon pretty fairly.

An Englishman considers
Turkish courage to be ferocity
religion . . . . . fanaticism
wisdom . . . . . craftiness
policy . . . . . perfidy
tactics . . . . . treachery
philosophy . . . . taciturnity
beauty . . . . . obesity
dignity . . . . . arrogance
love . . . . . concupiscence
sentiment . . . . . sensuality.

A Turk considers
European morality to be infidelity
science . . . . . witchcraft
precaution . . . . . impiety
liberty . . . . . licentiousness
modesty . . . . . indecorum
matrimony . . . . solitary confinement
gallantry . . . . . debauchery
politeness . . . . . frivolity
gaiety . . . . . imbecility
genius . . . . . penknife making.

The Turk most religiously believes in every tittle I have set down; the Englishman is no less firmly convinced of its veracity; and which is in the right? Of course we are; of course the Turks think they are; but then we have the advantage of superior knowledge to direct our judgment!

Having been delayed a day at Assouan, which contains nothing curious but a variety of French lineaments in Arab faces, which, during the long encampment of the French troops there, no doubt was caused by the imaginations of the poor women impressing the features of their offspring with their fears, I set out for the far-famed cataract of the Nile, which is only a couple of hours' ride from Assouan. I was no sooner beyond the boundary of Egypt, than new complexions, manners, customs, and scenery burst upon me.

The sudden change of language and complexion surprises the traveller more at Assouan than at any other place he visits; a few paces suffice to give a new character to a people, and even to the soil. The deafening roar of the cataract, which was audible to the ears of antiquity at Assouan, I heard not at a distance of a hundred yards; the

Nile was already on the decrease, but the fall was insignificant, hardly exceeding that at London Bridge. Half a dozen Nubian boys threw themselves into the most impetuous part of the current, and were borne down the stream with great velocity, for about two or three minutes; they then swam ashore and demanded, boldly, the price of their intrepidity. We divided a handful of paras among them; some were not satisfied, and brandished their rusty knives, but the sight of a pocket pistol dispersed them in an instant.

We arrived at Philœ, after a fatiguing walk, in the heat of noonday. The beauty of the scenery around this enchanting isle compensated us for all our toil from Alexandria to the cataract; it was, indeed, the only spot in all our travels whose scenery deserved to be called sublime. The granite rocks, in a thousand majestic forms, rise from the Nile at its western extremity, and are beautifully contrasted with the picturesque effects of the stately palm trees and magnificent structures of Philœ: indeed, the whole island seems to be a delightful garden, studded with obelisks and temples.

There are four recollections of a traveller, which

might tempt him to wish to live for ever: the sea view of Constantinople, the sight of the Colliseum by moonlight, the prospect from the summit of Vesuvius at the dawn, and the first glimpse of Philœ at sunset.

The island is about six hundred yards in length, and one hundred and thirty in breadth; in this little space there are the ruins of three large temples, and some remains of several smaller ones. The Egyptians considered it a sacred spot, and some passages in Diodorus Siculus favour the supposition of its being the place where the remains of *Osiris* were deposited; and, perhaps, it was from this cause that none but priests were suffered to approach it.

The capitals of the various columns are simple imitations of several indigenous plants; such as the leaves of the doum, the flower of the lotus, the head of the date, and the branches of the palm. The ornaments of architecture had their origin in these, and one of the French savans has well observed, that the elevation of the first column was only an imitation of the stem of the lotus supporting its flower. The paintings are fresher here than in any other temples: the same

human sacrifices are represented; gigantic heroes holding supplicating victims by the hair, and the well pleased gods conferring immortality on the murderers.

I was more struck here than elsewhere, by the different complexions given to the two sexes, in their pictures;—the men are always painted red, the women yellow. The few colours known to the Egyptians enabled them to approach no nearer to the real complexions of their race. If a painter had now only the use of the primitive colours, he would find that red would be the nearest approach to the swarthy complexion of the male Nubian, and yellow to the female, whose tint is so much lighter from the less exposure to the sun. But what struck me as the greatest proof I met with in Nubia, of the identity of the Nubian race and that of the Egyptians, is the strong resemblance of the former to the features of all the Egyptian statues. The length of the eye and the peculiar softness of the mouth are the two distinguishing characteristics of Egyptian physiognomy, such as their sculpture has transmitted; and these are the very points which are most remarkable in the Nubian countenance. One must have seen the

people of Nubia, to understand how beautiful is that elongation of the eye which is peculiar to them and to the Egyptian figures.

The women of Nubia, in general, are not so good looking as the men; but, in the harems of the better classes, I have seen very lovely Nubian ladies. Polygamy is not very common in Nubia; indeed, the people have nothing in common with the Arabs but *the name* of the faith of *Islam*.

On our arrival at Philœ we were glad enough to take possession of a Nubian hut, within the precincts of the great temple: as we found nothing within it but the remnant of an old mat, we concluded it was a deserted habitation, and so we spread our carpets, and put our coffee-pots and rice bowls into requisition. In short, we prepared the wretched hovel for a residence of several days.

For the first four hours we were left in quiet possession of our dwelling; we saw nothing of the inhabitants, of whom there are twelve or thirteen families; but in the evening, we had not long retired to our carpet beds, when we were awoke by the most horrible screams at the very door of our hut; and on rising to ascertain the cause of the uproar, I saw an old woman tearing her grey

locks, and throwing her bare and withered arms about in a frantic manner; one moment she flung a handfull of dust into the air, then sent a stone banging at our door; she was the most frightful looking old woman I ever beheld, and the most furious. Her imprecations were evidently showered upon us; it turned out that we had taken possession of her habitation, and she was frighting "the isle from its propriety," for an old mat which she swore we came there expressly to steal. I sent out my Nubian servant, a Berberi lad, to treat with this modern Sycorax, for neither myself nor my companion had the courage to face her; he was empowered to pay her thrice the value of the mat, and the large sum of six piastres a day for the hire of her house, which was just ten feet square. The old lady rejected the proposal with scorn; she would have nothing to do with robbers and Christians, she wanted her mat: this we gave her, but her fury never diminished for an instant: we got rid of her however by sunset, when her tongue was wearied with cursing us. We found out that this old lady was the terror of the island, a sorceress of great repute, and had been called the Philœ Hecate, by some

modern travellers. We had scarcely been stretched on our carpets a second time, when we were again disturbed by another of Hecate's attacks: this time she was accompanied by a troop of female furies, who set up such a shrill and appalling shout in front of our quarters that it really made us bounce with some alarm from our beds; the door, which was only ajar, flew open with a kick; and now the ladies sent in a volley of clods, which harassed us a good deal. The voice of old Hecate was heard triumphant over all: "Come out of my house, you *Caffres!* take the curse of your nation from my walls, you infidels! you came to steal my mat, you thieves! leave my house, confusion to your race!" Such were the gentle terms which my servant translated to me: but when she called for assistance, and cried out "murder, robbery, and rape," I felt as if there were a scruple of ipecacuanha in the accusation. They retreated whenever we showed ourselves at the door, then advanced whenever we disappeared, alternately, showering clods and imprecations upon us. I lost patience at last, and resolved to dislodge them from the temple, which was the place of their retreat. When they approached the door again, I armed

myself with two small water melons, and sallied forth: the consternation of the enemy was dreadful, some of them had not time to wheel round; I let fly my two melons, one at the head of the next fury to me, the other at Hecate's; the effect was tremendous; had I discharged bombs, they could not have done more execution; Hecate received her shot in the jaw, the soft melon was shattered on her iron countenance, the fleaks of the pulp hung about her face as if her brains had oozed out, and indeed it was the general opinion of the spectators that they had. The old lady scampered off, notwithstanding the shock, roaring at every step vengeance on her "murderer:" we fired a brace of pistols in the air to make the victory complete, for no Nubian who heard the report of Frank fire-arms, would ever venture his body within their reach. The Nubians have a mortal apprehension of small pistols.

Never did heroes enjoy themselves more after a victory than we did;—we laughed for hours at the precipitate retreat of the old women, and the ridiculous distress of the wounded Hecate. But alas! we had made bullets of our repast;

what ought to have served for supper we had hurled at our foes; in short, we had nothing to feed on that night, but the glory of the action, and black bread. Next day, every man woman and child fled at our approach; the terror of our arms had spread over the island; and I verily believe we might have expelled the thirteen families, which compose the population of Philœ, in five and thirty calendar minutes; but as this noble project never entered into our heads, we endeavoured to gain the good-will of the inhabitants, by giving presents to all who dared to approach us; so that in two days we "bought golden opinions of all sorts of people," not even excepting the implacable old Hecate.

We now made various excursions in the neighbourhood of the island, on either bank of the Nile; we always had the necessity of going well armed, and letting the Nubians see we were so.

Every trace of Arab civilization (and that is little enough) is lost at the cataracts: neighbouring villages are at war, and towns, not twenty miles remote, have been in perpetual hostility for ages: this accounts for every man being armed; the peasant must have his shield and spear, and

his dagger buckled on his arm, if he has only to cross his fields: a man would as soon think of going into his neighbour's house without his turban or his skull-cap, as to enter it without his weapons. The Nubians in general are inhospitable and treacherous: if they can attack a traveller unawares, they do so; but if they see the muzzle of a European pistol they skulk away. The men are of a very slender and elegant form; they are encumbered with no flesh, and like the camel, it seems as if nature had a purpose in depriving them of every superfluous portion of muscle, and leaving them apparently only tendons to move their slender frames. The women have a mortal hatred to Europeans: they are less reserved than the Arab women, in so far as submitting their charms to the gaze of strangers, but they are more virtuous; and Europeans, who idly boast of their intrigues from Alexandria to Assouan, have more to say in Nubia of the ferocity of the soft sex than of their tender passions.

The female children are suffered to go about in *puris naturalibus*, till the age of puberty;—only a small leather fringe, strung with glass

bugles, covers the loins. The women wear a flowing cotton dress, which is thrown over the shoulder, and leaves the opposite arm and part of the breast exposed.

While I remained at Philœ, I was pestered with their entreaties for physic from morning to night: old women used to come from the opposite bank of the Nile, with a log of wood under their arms, and thus swim across the river, with their garments tied on their heads, to get a dose of physic to make them fruitful.

They all imagined I effected cures by supernatural agency; and they considered a *waraga*, or triangular scroll with some outlandish figures, as good a specific for ophthalmia as any drug whatsoever. I was brought to the harem of the chief man of *Shelaal*, to visit a sick young woman who was extremely pretty: after feeling her pulse and examining her tongue, I asked her where she felt pain? she put her hand on her heart; I asked what she complained of? "Why of love to be sure," said another woman, "she wants a charm from you to make a young man at Deir fall in love with her." "But I am no magician," said I in Arabic, "my good people, I can physic

you, but you must dispense with charms." "Ah don't say so, Hawadgi," cried half a dozen, "we know you are a magician, we know you made a little woman's face as big as the moon by looking into a glass, and that you can make a man at Deir love a woman in Shelaal, by writing a *waraga*." The poor girl besought me with so much importunity that I had not the heart to refuse; so I set to writing a *waraga* for a love-sick girl; I ornamented it with a representation of two hearts in contact, transfixed by a dart; and this I gave her, with an injunction that whenever her lover came to Shelaal she was to cross his path three times, put her ring finger on the charm and smile upon him thrice, and if he did not marry her that it was not the fault of the *waraga*. I now found it impossible to get away without giving half a dozen charms more to the swarthy matrons of the village: it seemed to me as if the malediction of Lear was on the land, and that nature had dried up all the organs of increase.

What strange situations are travellers placed in: consulted as magicians at one time; accused

of sheep-stealing at another; oftentimes applied to as physicians, and sometimes even as murderers. A Nubian very gravely requested of me to give him a *waraga*, to kill the only son of his enemy who was living at *Wady Helfa*.

A most extraordinary coincidence occurred while we were at Philœ, which the Nubians attributed solely to our sorcery. Our hut became so intolerably hot after sunset, that we were frequently obliged to spread our carpets under the canopy of heaven, and sleep on an elevated spot which overlooked the Nile. One night in particular the incessant creaking of a water wheel, for irrigating the land on the opposite bank, allowed us not a moment of repose; the annoyance was so great, that my friend exclaimed, "I wish the *Sakie* and the oxen were at the bottom of the Nile!" I could not help desiring at the moment that they were; but little did we imagine that our wishes were to be carried into effect before the morning. The first thing we heard at the dawn was the vociferation of a number of Nubians, who were employed in extricating the oxen from the ruins of the *Sakie*, which had tumbled into the stream

about an hour previously. Such accidents are common enough on the banks of the Nile: the current very often washes away the mound which supports the wheel, and precipitates oxen, labourers, and all into the river.

But the strange coincidence in this case was so marked, that we almost reproached ourselves with the catastrophe. Had the Nubians known we had even spoken of the *Sakie* before it fell, they would infallibly have attributed the event to our evil influence; and as it was, our presence in the neighbourhood was enough to make them attribute the misfortune to the *Caffres*. But we had made so many friends, or at least acquaintances, in Philœ, and we were so well provided with fire-arms, that they did not molest us.

The children of the island, who used to fly at our approach, and sometimes even throw themselves into the Nile and swim to the opposite shore, now thronged about us; the women, who formerly made war on us, and fled with terror when we came near them, now collected daily round the door of our hovel, to sell us their ornaments, their glass beads, and bracelets: in short, the irresist-

ible influence of kindness and good-humour triumphed over their prejudices, and when we left them, there was nothing but *salaaming* and good wishes.

We embarked at Assouan for Alexandria. Our old *Reis* was heartily glad to see us: we feasted the crew with an entire sheep, and we were all in high spirits with the prospect of returning home. Alexandria was, indeed, a sort of second home to me; I had passed some years there, and many were there who I knew would be well pleased to meet me. I had ample occasion, during the voyage, to observe the good feelings of the Arabs; they talked to me of their little children, of Hassan, and Mohammed, and Abdallah, and Abdriman, till I became familiar with the names of all their little ones; they talked with ecstasy of their meeting after so long an absence; how they would buy them new *papoushes* at the *Beiram:* and then they would pray that I might have "a happy sight of my friends;" that I might "find my father's house where it stood when I left it;" and that I might leave it no more but to "come once to Scanderia to see them again."

Some travellers may think that these good wishes had their origin in the hopes of a *backsheesh.* Perhaps interested motives might have some little to do with this courtesy; but I am quite sure that good-nature had a great deal more. Generally speaking, the Arabs are the kindest hearted people in the world: no people are more sensible of good treatment, more susceptible of improvement, and, unfortunately, no people on earth are more infamously ruled.

We descended the Nile with rapidity, without sail or oar, though the Etesian winds still blew in our teeth. The current carried us down at the rate of three miles an hour; in some places more; and we arrived at Antinoè in ten days. Some of our crew suffered from dysentery, and two of them from a malady contracted by "general subscription" of the *Alme* at *Kenneh.* My medicine chest was quite exhausted, and there were no drugs to be had at *Antinoè.* The state of the two men was so urgent, that I was obliged to have recourse to my invention to discover some immediate means of relieving them. My thermometer caught my eye; perhaps it was the first

time a thermometer was ever applied to the cure of an inveterate disease; but necessity is the mother of invention. I took the mercury out of the bulb, with no small labour converted it into pills, and by their means I arrested the ravages of a formidable disease.

We again visited the interesting ruins of *Antinoè*. In examining the tombs we were exposed to the rays of the sun for four hours, and its reflection from a white calcareous soil was so distressing to the eyes that, when we got back to our boat, my friend could not bear the light. Three hours after our arrival aboard he was seized with the most violent ophthalmia I had yet witnessed. He would not suffer me to bleed him. He was attacked between four and five; at nine I was seized with the same disorder; at first I felt nothing of it but a very slight sense of fulness of the eye. At ten, my friend suffered so much, that he begged of me to take some blood from his arm. I took about six ounces, which was all he would allow me to abstract; and my own eyes were so bad that I could hardly see to tie up the vein. Every moment the pain became more

excruciating; the sensation was that of gravel being rubbed between the eyelid and the ball; the globe of the eye became so inflamed that the lids could not be closed; in short, such torture I never suffered; I thought I would have gladly exchanged one hour of the ophthalmia for a week of toothach.

My friend and myself lay moaning side by side all night: at length my distraction was so great that I got an Arab to tie a cord round my arm, and with great difficulty I bled myself to the extent of twenty ounces. I found no immediate relief. I tried all sorts of lotions, hot and cold, but I found they only aggravated the pain; subsequently, I tried tepid ones, of common marshmallows and sugar of lead, and these I found, both in the inflammatory and purulent stages, to be the most soothing application of all. The application of heat or cold I found always equally injurious.

In the morning I was somewhat relieved, but the globe of the eye was still so prominent that I could not close the lids; I bled myself again, to the extent of twenty-five ounces; the relief was

now immediate; I was much better all day, but at night, I had a good deal of pain, and, at three o'clock in the morning, I again bled myself to the extent of twelve ounces.

The following morning the inflammation had wholly subsided, the pain ceased, and nothing remained but the intolerance of light and the weakness of vision. In short, in four days, by active bleeding, I subdued a terrible attack of ophthalmia. My poor companion was less fortunate; for two months after our arrival in Cairo he was confined to his room. We entered the Consul's house in a sorry plight; we had left it a few months before in high health and spirits, and we now returned low enough in both: my friend was in utter darkness, and I was reduced to a skeleton by the loss of blood, and the few days' suffering I had undergone.

As Mr. Salt was in Alexandria, I made no long stay in Cairo; in five days I had the pleasure of meeting him and my other Alexandrian friends; and, after a few months of repose, I again set out on new journeys, more perilous and fatiguing than those which I had accomplished.

I set out, with one servant, to visit Palestine, Syria, and the Red Sea. We crossed the Desert, from Alexandria to Damietta, along the seaside; and in five days we performed the journey. An old Greek priest, with a venerable white beard descending to his breast, who was returning to his convent in Tripoly, of which he was the superior, joined us the first day. He was glad to have the protection of an Englishman in the Turkish costume, to save him from insult and imposition; he was a most excellent old man, and was so grateful for what little attention I showed him, that I could not prevent him from performing all the offices of a servant during our journey. At Rosetta, he took me to the Greek convent, where we were hospitably entertained for two days; and, in return, I franked him for the remainder of the journey.

In all the route, I know of nothing interesting but the ruins of Canopus, on the beach, about ten miles from Alexandria, and the scene of the memorable battle in which Abercrombie fell. Near the shore, where the sea had undermined the soil, I perceived a stratum of human bones, which

proved to be those of the soldiers who fell on that day. On one skeleton I found the remains of a red coat, and some regimental buttons, which were all that remained, after thirty years, to tell that the poor victim of glory—was an English soldier.

In two hours more, we passed the Bay of Aboukir; it was smooth and tranquil; a spectator could hardly have imagined that the sound of war had ever disturbed its stillness; or, that the wreck of many a stately ship was covered by its waters, and that the remains of many a gallant fellow were strewed upon its sand. I picked up a cannon shot, near the shore, which soon convinced me, if I doubted for a moment, that the deadly silence of Aboukir had once been broken by the fury of Christian armies.

Nothing can be more bleak and desolate than the remainder of the route to Rosetta, and from that town to Damietta, where I arrived a few days ago. I have taken up my quarters in the house of the British Vice-consul, Signore Surur, a gentleman whose hospitality, and whose acquaintance with Arab literature, are well known to all travellers.

I purpose proceeding from Damietta, across the Desert, to Suez; and, after having visited the shores of the Red Sea, to pursue the course of the Israelites to the "*Pisgah* tops" and *Palestine.*"

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXX.

TO DR. JAMES JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR, Damietta, May 16, 1827.

I CAME to Damietta, with the purpose of remaining two or three days, and here have I been for three months. The Vice-consul, in whose house I reside, is a native of Syria, the head of his nation, a man of considerable erudition, and better versed in Arabic literature than, perhaps, any one in the country.

The society of such a person, you may conceive, was one great inducement to remain so long as I have done; but, perhaps, the principal cause of my detention, was my great reputation as a *hakkim*, amongst the Levantine merchants, who form, in Damietta, a very numerous and respectable body. The fame of an amputation of the shoulder, which I performed in Alexandria, had

spread to Damietta, so that, on my arrival, I was hailed as a little demigod in physic. In no place was I ever treated with so much respect; and, indeed, in no part of the East did I ever receive so many marks of gratitude. One lady presented me with a splendid silk dress of her own embroidering; another with a Cachemire shawl; another with several beautiful handkerchiefs of her own working; an old merchant with a bale of tobacco, and another with a number of Syrian dresses and several pieces of Damascus silk.

You may see I was in high favour with these good people; and you may conceive to what a state surgical science is reduced in Damietta, when I inform you that the simple operation of tapping had not, in modern times, been performed there before I did it.

The Levantines keep their women immured like the Turks, and suffer them not to go abroad unveiled. I was, however, a privileged person; and had access to every harem. There are no women in Egypt to be compared with the Levantines for beauty; and, if the affections of a youthful *hakkim* were not wholly fixed on "the

philosophy of physic," his heart would be in danger in Damietta.

Signore Surur, the Consul, is the private friend and counsellor of the Governor, who is married to a niece of the Pacha. With this great Turk I am in the habit of dining almost daily, either at his house or at Surur's. At the latter's, a party of seventy Turks sat down, a few evenings ago, to the most magnificent banquet I ever witnessed in the East. One hundred and thirty dishes of various sorts, fish, flesh, soups, sweets, fruits, &c. were set down and removed in succession. The head of the religion, and several priests were present, which Surur considered as no small honour to a Christian.

The soldiers and servants of the guests had also to be entertained in another apartment, and of these there were no less than one hundred: and what I considered as a still greater hardship than the necessity of entertaining these menials, was the obligation of paying each of them for the trouble of gormandizing at Surur's expense. After dinner there was a band of Arab music sent into the apartment: I counted seven different instru-

ments, and one, like a fiddle with two strings, "discoursed such excellent music" that it drew tears of ecstasy from many eyes. Nothing is more singular, at first, than to hear the moans of the Arabs at "the dying fall" of their impassioned notes. They are, perhaps, the people most truly devoted to music, and the most deeply affected by its melody of any in the world. Surur has often said to me, "You are superior to us in every thing but in music and poetry." He was well acquainted with our music and with Italian poetry, and being a man devoid of prejudice, except that which every man possesses—a partiality for his native land, I respected his opinions. I saw the Arabs in Cairo, who were delighted with the tactics of the French, put their hands to their ears when the French band struck up a very spirited air; every thing else they could endure, but the music of the Franks was too much for their ears. Many of their songs, which horrified me at first, at length became agreeable; and, such is habit, that I protest there are half a dozen of their airs which I now prefer to many of Rossini's.

After the music at Surur's banquet, two buffoons

were introduced, who played all sorts of ridiculous tricks, and who had their eyebrows scorched, and some gunpowder set fire to underneath them when they were in the act of sitting down, by way of amusement for the party. Story telling, smoking, chess playing, and singing, closed the entertainment, but not before the head of the religion made an impromptu poem on the generosity of *Surur*, and the beauty of his little daughter *Zarafat*. On this occasion the pompous Governor drank no wine, but, when we were in private, he quaffed his bottle with me and Surur, and enjoyed himself like a very jovial fellow.

I sometimes accompanied him in his excursions on the Nile; he was a capital sportsman, and made it a point to fire at birds with a single ball: in this way I have seen him kill sparrows repeatedly, indeed, he very rarely missed. One day I was disputing the excellence of an officer's pistol who sat by me; he would have it that it was an English pistol, though it was really a German one; when I assured him it was not English, he very deliberately primed it, and retiring to the distance of four or five yards, he fired between my legs, as I sat on a high bench, at a jar about

twenty feet distant: he smashed the jar, and said, in a triumphant tone, "Well, is that an English pistol or not?"—"Oh, most undoubtedly," said I, "it must be English:" had I hesitated, he would have fired the other in the same direction; and it is not very pleasant to have a drunken Turk shooting between one's legs.

I had a good specimen of Turkish insolence and pusillanimity at Surur's grand entertainment. A Turkish officer who stood behind me, when we were all crowding round the jesters to witness their buffoonery, took occasion to pull off my turban without being perceived; I put it on again, thinking I had not secured it properly before: a second time it was pulled off, but I took no notice of it, determined to be on the alert and seize the hand which did it the next time. I had no sooner put it on again than off it went, as before; I turned round with such quickness that I seized the fellow's hand before he had time to withdraw it. *Marass*, *Kelp*, and *Caffre* were the first gentle epithets that escaped my lips, invective, even in Arabic, is easily acquired. He endeavoured to release his hand, but I held it fast; he put the other on the handle of his pistol,

but I gave him no time to draw it, he measured his length on the floor instanter. There was a general uproar; the two brothers of the Consul were by my side in an instant. I informed them of the fellow's insolence, and to my great satisfaction I heard Yussuf Surur say to the prostrate gentleman, "The hakkim was wrong not to have shot you!"

The other Turkish officers, instead of resenting such strong language, crouched like dogs to Surur, and begged of him, for God's sake, to tell the Governor that the noise was occasioned by a man's slipping off the divan, on which he had been standing to see the jester. The fellow, who had just raised himself up, took hold of my hand in the most abject manner, entreating of me to forgive him, and not to tell the Governor of what had happened, for he would certainly lose his head. I set him at ease by consenting to forgive him; and then prevailed on Yussuf Surur to pass over, likewise, the insolence which had been practised in his brother's house. There was such a crowd in the room at the time of this fracas, that the Governor remained ignorant of the cause. Had I passed over this insult with impunity the fellow

would have despised me, but for having resented it he ever after honoured and respected me; if I met him in the street he *salaamed* me to the ground, if I saw him at the Governor's, he was the first to greet me: in short, I observed in this instance what I had noticed in very many others, that the *argumentum ad hominem* is the only logic which a Turk can understand, or his proud heart be convinced by.

I was fortunate enough to have been able in some measure to repay *Surur* for all his kindness to me, by rescuing his infant from the last extremity, by a very trifling surgical operation, and subsequently by inoculating it when smallpox was rife in Damietta.

The climate of Damietta I do not consider good; the rice grounds are necessarily laid under water for nearly half the year, and Damietta is consequently little better than a swamp.

That species of bilious remittent fever, which the natives call pernicious fever, has prevailed for the last two months; I treated several cases, I presume, as other English medical men would have done, and I flattered myself that I was very successful in my practice; but on inquiring

into twelve cases of recent occurrence amongst *Surur's*, Arab husbandmen, I found that they had no medical treatment whatsoever, and that the mortality was precisely the same with them without physic, as it was with mine with it. It was rather humiliating to a *hakkim*, to discover that nature in this instance was not influenced by his art, and that whether men were drenched with physic or with cold water, the event was the same*.

The evenings are passed at Surur's, in reciting Arab poetry, which he is passionately fond of; and really it requires to have heard Surur's declamation to conceive the beauty of the language, and the genuine poetry of its imagery.

He copied out for me two of what he considered the most beautiful Arab poems that exist; and as they are little known even in Egypt, and not at all in Europe, I think you would have a

* The celebrated German physician, Hufeland, in one of his latest publications says: "Of the diseases which are not generally considered mortal, I am now fully convinced, after thirty years' practice, that of all the patients whom I treated, two thirds would have recovered without my assistance, or that of medicine, and even under the most opposite modes of treatment."

bad opinion of my taste, if I passed them by unnoticed; I am indebted to my friend, Dr. Belfour, for the following literal translation.

In Egypt I could find none, with the exception of Surur, who was capable of reading the original ancient Arabic of these poems; for one of them is as old as the days of Mahomet. In Malta, the celebrated professor of Arabic there could make no hand of them; in Rome, the eastern professors in the Propaganda could only give me a garbled version.

The author is supposed to be addressing himself, after he has been abandoned by his wife, who became an inmate of the Prophet's harem.

THE CASIDA.

BY IMIM ALI, (MOHAMMED'S COUSIN).

"ZEINAB has broken the ties which once bound her to thee.

"Such are the turns of fate; one spins the web, which another sunders.

"While she spread the raven locks through

which her beauty shone, thy head became ash-coloured, like the plumes of the drizzled ostrich.

" When she saw thee, she wished thee far away; for it was long since she desired thy meeting, or exulted in its hope.

" Such is the attainment of transient things; the making of a treaty with a deserted country, the looking on a lightning cloud which sheds no rain.

" Resign thy lingering hold of youth, thou art deceived in its duration; devote thyself to virtue, for the best of thy days are gone; youth is past and returns no more; years advance, and whither mayest thou fly?

" Sorrow has become thy guest, thou perceivest not its entrance, but thou hast wept over its acquaintance with bitterness of heart.

" Forego the follies of thy youth; remember and repent of thy errors, foolish mortal.

" Dread the dire account thou hast to give; for, without doubt, all is reckoned and written down.

" The two angels will not forget the sum, though thou hast forgotten it; they will cast it up when thou art most unmindful of it.

" Remember, thy breathings are numbered, by night as well as by day.

" Thy soul is a deposit committed to thee to deliver up again; please thee or not, thou shalt be spoiled of it.

" All thy possessions, most assuredly, shall death wrest from thee.

" How vain is the endeavour to rear an edifice of pride, whose base is earth; when earth itself must surely vanish.

" How wretched is the abode whose peace has no endurance; whose structure is doomed to desolation.

" Listen: thou art offered advice by a true friend, whose understanding has been fostered by education.

" His counsel will cost thee little; therefore cherish his precepts, if thou hast a thirst for knowledge, or a hope to benefit by experience.

" Put no trust in Fortune; she ever abandoneth the brave, and exalteth the newest minion of her favour.

" When the times are sick, what can ease the public stomach but the removal of all that is honourable and noble.

" Let piety be thy portion; love it, and thou shalt prosper, for piety has no price.

" Be obedient, that God may love thee; for obedience leads to Heaven.

" Give back what has been committed to thy charge, and defraud no man.

" Be just and oppress not; for thereby shalt thou profit.

" Dread the prayer of the oppressed; for though thy arrows have drained his blood, his supplications are not to be suppressed.

" Incline thy protection to thy relatives and friends, and to thy servants all of them; and if they have offended thee, forgive them.

" Cultivate the friendship of the noble hearted; and though they seem to slight thee, still excuse them.

" Despair not, though thou errest from the truth; whom hast thou seen walk so surely that he never stumbles?

" If in thy time calamity assail thee, and difficulty environ thee, pray to thy God; he ever inclines to the humble hearted, and is nearer to him than the veins which pervade his neck.

" Reject the robe of pride, and number not thyself amongst the self-lovers.

" Be thy companion princely in his soul, that he may bless thee; openhanded, just, and virtuous, that he may serve thee.

" Choose thy friend with care, and confide in him, that the bonds of your mutual love may be strong as the ties which unite brothers.

" Be not familiar with the vulgar man, he is contagious; the scabby camel derives no benefit from the touch of the sound one, but the healthy camel becomes contaminated by communication with the sick.

" Poverty is accounted disgraceful; but how notable the defect in him who boasts of high descent.

" The rich man is honoured by all; they who stand in his presence aspire to nothing but his bounty; he rules the world by his wealth, his word is obeyed, and his sayings are approved of; the people smile at his approach, they stand before his divan, and seek to come near him.

"Be not avaricious; avarice makes a merit of contempt, and renders its slave miserable.

"The miser wanders about like one bereft of reason, searching every corner as he goes, and seeking his idol by every sordid artifice.

"Affluence, alas! is not always the portion of the active; wealth flows abundantly to fools! whilst fortune looks with coldness on the clever man.

"Be contented; for in contentment is peace of mind. Ambition hath none.

"Invest not thyself with vain desires; for thou puttest on the clothing of contempt, as the fabled *Ashab* was covered with ignominy for his covetousness.

"Guard thy tongue, and be cautious of its speech; for by the tongue a man is saved or ruined.

"Weigh every word before thou utterest it;

and join not in too much conversation, lest thou perish.

" Conceal thy secret and preserve it inviolate and entire : a broken vase cannot be refitted.

" A divulged secret is spread by countless tongues, and each exaggerates or falsifies it.

" Shun the liar; he is an unfit companion and a bad friend.

" Avoid the man who fosters hatred; though he affect to love thee, keep him at a distance, and attract him not.

" Enmity, however old, still cherishes in its breast a secret grudge.

" Greet even thy foe with a salutation, and appear not to be apprehensive of him; but beware of him on the day when thou seest him smile; for the lion always shows his eyetooth when his rage is deadly.

" When thou perceivest thy friend flattering thee, be persuaded that no enemy is fitter to be shunned.

" There is no good in the friendship of the man who flatters thee; he has sweetness on his tongue, but his heart revolts from thee.

" He meets thee with an oath that he is thy wellwisher; but he turns his back and whispers calumnies against thee.

" He steeps his tongue in honey; and clothes his feet with the cunning of the fox.

" Run not after the world; for that which is easily caught is a worthless capture.

" One single day of thy life place not thy trust in woman: for though she swear to thee by the most sacred oath, she will still deceive thee.

" She soothes thee with words, and smiles on thee with softness; but when she is moved to anger, she is like the raging lion.

" When wealth becomes scarce in one country, and subsistence precarious, remove to another: God's earth is widely spread from east to west.

" Good advice is given, if thou art capable of receiving it.

" What is worth a better price if sold, or more esteem if given, than prudent counsel.

" Take then this poem as a present of strung pearls; yea, of greater value; and give ear to its admonition: they are the words of a wise man, who moved along the high and crowded road of life with a constant step, and who was familiar with the great affairs of the world: that man was Ali, the cousin of Mohammed, of an exalted rank and noble station!"

Such, my dear Sir, is the beautiful production of Imam Ali; it will suffice, perhaps, to show that bards, even in Arabia, may have glimpses of Parnassus as well as of Paradise; and I am sure you will agree with me, in thinking that in the *Casida*

there is not only poetry and philosophy, but also religion and morality.

In my next, I will give you the short poem of *Ebn el Wardi*, called the *Lamja*, which contains, perhaps, not so much philosophy as the *Casida*, but still abounds in splendid passages.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXII.

TO DR. JAMES JOHNSON.

MY DEAR SIR, Damietta, May 26, 1827.

I SEND you, according to my promise, the translation of the other poem. I have chosen rather to give it " with all its errors on its head," than, for the sake of euphony, to alter one word of the original.

THE LAMJA.

BY EBN EL WARDI.

" MAKE no more mention of the tune and the lovesong, give us moral discourses, and away with the company of the jester.

" Talk not any longer about the days of youth, the days of youth are a star for ever set.

" The sweetest of thy life thou hast already passed, its season is gone by, but its sins remain.

" Leave alone the beauteous woman, and mind her not, that thou mayest walk in honour, and be illustrious.

" Part with all the instruments of mirth, that excite thee to wanton movements; and regard not the lascivious dancing girl.

" When she comes forth, she eclipses the sun in splendour, she moves with the suppleness of the slender javelin.

" If we compare her with the moon, she is yet fairer, and she surpasses that body in the beauty of her shape.

" But think what term the coveted beauty of the *Alme* leads thee to; to a state of infirmity and dissolution.

" If thou art a man, avoid wine; how can a rational being endeavour after madness!

" Fear God, for that fear dwells not in the heart of man, without raising him towards heaven.

" It is not the highway robber that is brave; but he who fears God is brave indeed.

" Believe in the law, and trust not the man who passes the night in watching the progress of the planets!

" Our minds are confounded in contemplating the power of Him who has directed us in our ways,—the great and glorious God!

" Death is written as the fate of man; and how many men have been hurled from honour to disgrace, and from magnificence to misery!

" Where are *Canaan* and Nimrod? Where are they who ruled the earth, and gave and took away its kingdoms? Where are they who were lords of the land, and builders of its palaces?

" They have all perished, and nothing but the ruins of their monuments remain!

" Where are the masters of wisdom, the possessors of intelligence, the patrons of learning, and the former generations? God will raise all of them from the dead, and reward each according to his deeds!

" Receive, my son, the maxims of wisdom, by which the welfare of kingdoms is secured.

" Seek knowledge, and neglect it not; for all good things are far from the negligent.

" Study the law with all thy mind, and be not drawn away from it by the search after worldly goods, or by domestic cares.

" Curtail thy sleep, and increase thy knowledge: he who knows the value of his object despises the pains it cost him.

" Say not the possessors of science have passed away, and are forgotten; every one who has walked in the path of science has reached the goal.

" Increase of knowledge is a victory over idleness; and the beauty of knowledge is rectitude of conduct.

" Let the elegance of thy speech be founded on grammar; for he who knows not the properties of words is most deficient.

" Far be it from me to kiss a hand, to cut off which would be better than to salute.

" A hand that, if it reward me for adulation, humbles me by the meanness of its gift.

" Perhaps my own shame should be my sufficient portion.

" The sweetest of all words is when I say to thee, Take; the bitterest, that which holds out a hollow promise.

" Of an empire large as Cæsar's, how small a portion suffices for my wants; and though I have an ocean to quench my thirst, how small a draught allays it!

" It is not alone by a man's own endeavours that he gains what comes to his hands; neither is his neglect to be taxed with the loss of what goes by.

" Shun the world, for its custom is to humble the exalted and raise the vulgar.

" The life of a man whose mind is centred in worldly riches is the life of an idiot; nay, the fool's is better.

" How many brave men have fallen short of greatness, whilst the coward has attained his object!

" How many a fool has prospered in the world, and how many a philosopher has died of disappointment!

" Abandon, therefore, thy artful plans for aggrandizement, and compose thy bosom: true art lies in the abandonment of artifice.

" Whatever hand imparts not to others the

blessings it has received, that hand may God cast from him, to wither with infirmity!

"The race of liberal men is now extinct, not one remains; but the base-born abound, and they who rely on birth for honour.

"For thy part, never presume to say, my origin is such, my property is such; the basis of a man is on his knowledge.

"Conceal thy affairs in poverty and in affluence also; acquire wealth, and compare thy account with that of the idler.

"Men of unknown fathers have become princes; metals, by purification, are produced from dross.

"The rose blooms in the midst of thorns, and the narcissus sprouts from an onion.

"Let me, however, praise God for my extraction, if I be descended from *Abou Bekr*.

"The value of a man arises from his deeds, from them he is great or little.

" Let industry and diligence be to thee as a coat of mail, and avoid the company of the mean, the foolish, and the avaricious.

" Between profusion and avarice there is a mean; but both vices are murderers, in excess.

" Dare not to satirize departed princes; they are no longer subjects for satire, their crimes are past.

" Avoid the things which concern thee not; none can prosper without doing so.

" A man is not free from enemies though he hide himself on the mountain's summit; if he have the charge of government, however upright and just he may be, half the people he rules are his enemies.

" Avoid the society of the backbiter, and trust not in him. No man has excited the hatred of the world unless he have excelled.

" Treat the neighbour of thy house with kindness however troublesome he may be; and if thy

patience fail, how much better is it to remove than to remain.

" Stand aloof from the sovereign, and dread his power; quarrel not with him whose bidding is not sooner said than done.

" Be not the follower of rulers, though they desire thy attendance; and be opposed to them who blame them.

" Imitate, in this, the conduct of the slave who obeys every mandate of the *Cadi*, as though it were a moral or a proverb.

" The slave is as one restrained, and deprived of the delights of freedom; but his hands, at the day of judgment, shall be at large.

" Compare not the pleasure of rulers with that which they feel at the moment of laying down command.

" Authority, though pleasant to those who taste it, is like the poison which is concealed in honey.

" Excellence receives no hurt from the slight of the world; as the sun is unimpaired by the darkness of the evening.

" The fatigue of exalted office hath wrinkled my brow; but, above all, I have sickened at the necessity of flattering the vulgar.

" Curtail thy hopes that thou mayest prove happy; for the retrenchment of hope is the health of intellect.

" The man who is surprised by death in the midst of honours, he it is who feels the misery of dying.

" Pay thy visits only on alternate days, thou wilt be loved the more; for he who multiplies his comings and goings fatigues his friends.

" Choose a sword by its blade, and not by the scabbard. Respect a man for his worth, and not for his apparel.

" Thy love for thine own land is a manifest

weakness; go abroad, that thou mayest find a change of men; water becomes putrid by stagnation; the moon, by changing, becomes bright and perfect.

" Oh! thou who vainly seekest error in my words; let me tell thee, the sweetness of the rose is a poison to the beetle!

" Let not the blandishments of men deceive thee; he who plans deceit can vary his deportment.

" My words are like water, soft and palatable; but when heated, burning to some and nauseating to others.

" Though I live in times when the rich man is the lord of fate, and his name must be respected even in his absence, when admonition and reprehension are not to be endured, still, however, I venture to affirm that the men of the age are buried in ignorance, myself too in the number.

" Let then alone all individual distinctions.

" May heaven forgive the errors of the propounder of these maxims; of him who receives them; and of them who carry away knowledge from the receiver!"

Notwithstanding the length of these two poems, I believe that you will not regret the perusal of them, and you will evince more charitable feelings, after having done so, than a friend of mine, who was excessively indignant at the idea of a heathen writer presuming to express such beautiful morality in Pagan poetry.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXIII.

TO THE REV. D. M'PHERSON.

MY DEAR SIR, Damietta, June 22, 1827.

AFTER a journey to Suez, and along the shores of the Red Sea to the valley of Amara, I arrived here in safety a few days ago. The route from Damietta to Suez is so little known to travellers, that the good people here did every thing in their power to prevent me from encountering the perils which are supposed to beset it. The brother of the Consul, Francis Surur, had resolved to accompany me; but on the morning of my departure his friends flocked about him, supplicating him, with tears in their eyes, not to expose himself to the dangers of such a journey, and finally persuaded him to let me start alone. In their arguments with me on this subject, they said over and over, "You will find, hakkim, when it is too late, that

a man is not a watermelon, and that when he is once planted in the ground, he will never sprout again."

But although I was not a watermelon, I determined to proceed from Damietta to the Red Sea, because I conceived this to be the route of the Israelites, and not that by Cairo to Suez. My reason for so thinking I shall make you acquainted with presently. When a day's journey from Damietta, I sent for the Sheik of the Bedouins, contracted with him for three camels, at the rate of three dollars a camel, and, on paying a further sum of three dollars, he guaranteed my safety to the town of *Suez;* he recommended me, however, to doff my fine Turkish clothes, to take as little baggage as possible, to be well armed, and to keep on good terms with my *Bedouin* guides.

My whole baggage consisted of a carpet for a bed, a large umbrella for my tent, four skins of water, and a small sack of flour; a leathern bag, containing a coffee-pot and a saucepan, a little keg of date brandy, three pounds of coffee, five pounds of tobacco, and a small basket of rice; a Bedouin blanket and a coarse linen shirt replaced my dashing Mameluke attire.

In this state the plunderers of the Desert had little to gain by attacking me; and, unaccompanied as I was by guards or caravan, this precaution proved highly necessary. My two Bedouin guides were to meet me with the camels at *San*, the ancient *Tanis*, which is fifty miles from Damietta. This part of the journey it would have been unnecessarily fatiguing to have gone by land. The *Lake Menzalè* is only five miles distant from *Damietta*, and the voyage to *San* is commonly accomplished in two days.

The Consul and several Levantine merchants accompanied me to the Lake; and, after crowding my boat with several baskets of provisions and sweetmeats, which their kind ladies were good enough to prepare for me, I bid adieu to the Consul and his friends with feelings of regret, for I had experienced nothing but kindness and courtesy at their hands during my long stay in Damietta. I took with me a Levantine servant, who was only possessed of two ideas; one was, that a Greek Christian was worse than a Mahometan; the other, that clean linen was a European prejudice. He was a filthy fanatic.

The ancient geography of *Menzalè*, and its

vicinity in the Delta, is of so much importance in determining the site of the canal from Suez to the Nile, and more especially the spot where Zoar stood, that it may not be amiss to mention the modern canals and outlets which mark the seven ancient branches of the Nile.

The Canal of Kelioub marks the Pelusiac Branch
The Canal of Moes . . . . . the Tanitic Do.
The Canal of Ashmoum . . . the Mendesian Do.
The Canal of Bebek Bourlos . the Sebennytic Do.
The Bogaz of Damietta . . . the Phatnitic Do.
The Bogaz of Rosetta . . . . the Bolbitine Do.
The old Canal of Aboukir . . the Canopic Do.

Of these, two only of the original mouths are now remaining,—the Damietta and Rosetta branches. The French found the extreme length of the lake to be forty-three thousand fathoms, and its extreme width twelve thousand. But from my own observation of the time required to traverse it, I should judge it to be sixty-five miles long and fifteen broad.

No sea or lake in the world can, perhaps, boast of the same quantity of fish in a given space as

the Lake of Menzalè. My boatmen were in the habit of throwing a net over the side of the boat, then making a noise to attract the fish, by striking two pieces of wood, and by this simple process have I seen forty or fifty pounds weight of fish hauled up at once.

Opposite Metarièh, several fish, as large as haddock, in jumping out of the water, fell upon the deck. The men had only to tramp on the deck, and the fish were by our side; if I held a piece of bread on a level with the water, they followed the boat for miles; and, on one occasion, the *Reis* caught one with his hands, which could not have weighed less than twelve pounds.

Vast quantities of fish are salted and sent to Cairo; and in Damietta it is so cheap, that I have purchased eight *ochas* (upwards of twenty pounds weight) for three piastres (twelvepence).

The principal sorts of fish caught here are the *perca Luth*, or Lot's perch; another species, called *kescher;* the *charamoot*, or silurus anguillaris, the fin is said to be poisonous; the *burra*, or red mullet; the *kelp el bahr*, or sea dog; the *casheff*, or mormyrus anguilloides of Linnæus, this I have seen weighing thirty pounds. The

salmon of the Nile is found in the upper part of Menzalè, weighing from eighty to one hundred pounds.

The mixture of sea and river water in the lake causes it to be neither salt nor sweet; so that both river and sea fish are to be found here in equal quantity, but both, in my opinion, of an inferior quality. A thousand boats and three thousand persons are constantly employed during the fishing season. But it is impossible to form an idea of the multitude of birds which cover the lake, without having visited the spot. Pelicans, cormorants, cranes, and herons live only on the fish.

One of my boatmen stole a pelican at *Metaria;* an exploit which gained him great applause from the Captain; and all my remonstrances and endeavours to make him restore it were useless: he said he stole it for me, and it was no sin to steal a pelican, "*haramià mafish.*" It was a very large bird, perhaps larger than a swan; it swallowed the fish always entire. One day I counted the number of fish given to it, which amounted to eleven; the size of the fish varied from that of a herring to a small haddock.

We visited the islands of *Tennys* (which bears the ancient name of the lake) and *Touna*, which is now called *Sheik Abdallah*. These are the most considerable islands: in the latter there are some vestiges of an ancient city. We returned to *Metarièh* to buy provisions. The *Sheik el Belled* entertained me with pipes and coffee, and in return I physicked him and all his family.

The General Andreossi observed, that the plague was unknown in the islands of Menzalè. I could find no traces of it till my arrival in *San*, and there a cemetery was pointed out to me, in which three hundred black soldiers of the Pacha were interred two years ago, all having died of the plague. They were encamped outside the village, and not one of the *fellahs* was infected.

A similar occurrence happened nine years ago in Damietta. A vessel arrived from Syria, with a great number of Turkish passengers; they were all infected, and were distributed over Damietta before the fact was known of their illness. In the course of ten days most of them died, with unequivocal tokens of plague, buboes and carbuncles, yet not an individual of Damietta took the disease.

I may take this opportunity of saying, that there is no truth in the statement, that plague is not to be found beyond Cairo. I traced it eight hundred miles beyond that city; I found it had been at Girge five years ago; at Thebes, nine years ago; at Assouam, nine years ago; but beyond Philœ, I heard nothing of it; on the verge of the Desert, the Bedouins suffer from it; but in the interior of the wilderness, they deny ever having had it.

All the length of the lake *Menzalè*, a narrow tongue of land separates it from the sea, but not wholly; there are four passages, through which it is possible for barks to sail: through two of them I passed with a good deal of difficulty; at the mouth of each, there is a bar of sand, which makes the passage perilous from the sea.

The lake *Menzalè*, properly speaking, is not a maritime lake, but formed by the increase of the Damietta branch of the Nile*, at the expense of the *Tanitic* and *Mendesian* branches; and thereby, the sea having no opposition to its passage through the dry channels of the latter

* Herodotus says, the Damietta branch was dug by the inhabitants.

branches; the depth of the lake is from three to five feet, and on pushing an oar to the bottom, I have observed it coated with the common mud of the Nile, for about twenty inches deep.

About twelve miles from *Metarièh*, we entered the canal of *Moes*, which takes the name of *Meshrah* for six miles; about five miles more from the mouth, the canal is dammed up to prevent the influx of the salt water of the Lake.

We hired another boat on the opposite side of this *Tanitic* branch; and after an hour's rowing, we arrived at *San*, the ancient *Tanis*, or *Tean*. The Turkish Aga of the village politely conducted me to his house, had my baggage conveyed from the boat, and set me down to an excellent dish of *pilaw* and roast kid. After dinner he produced a bottle of *rakee* spirits, of a very dark colour and disagreeable taste; but which, out of politeness, I was obliged to drink; the second glass, however, I found it impossible to swallow, my stomach was so sick.

The Aga left me to perform his evening devotions; my servant had his share of the *rakee*, and on turning round to order some hot water, I found the poor wretch as pale as death, with one hand

on his stomach, and the other supporting his head: I had no doubt but we were both poisoned! The Aga had taken a great fancy to my fire-arms; and I supposed he had taken the surest mode of securing them.

I told my servant what I really believed, that it was all over with us! Never shall I forget the look of horror which my poor Levantine cast upon me. "Is there no medicine?" he exclaimed, "*Mafish dowa.*"

I bad him get hot water as speedily as possible, while I prepared two emetics. I took four grains of tartar emetic, and gave him the same dose: on him it operated immediately; but it had no effect on me for nearly an hour, and then a very slight one. I looked on him as preserved by the emetic; so I gave him directions about the disposal of my effects, and of my remains, in case I should not survive.

What between the emetic and the *rakee*, I never felt so uncomfortable in my life; and yet the ridiculous distress of my valet made me smile. He said, "it was all my fault: he knew very well we should be poisoned; I should not have taken him from Damietta; I should not have gone

into the house of a Turk;" in short, he left his death at my door; and at that moment, I bid more fairly in all appearance to visit the other world than he did. I remembered the Aga had a *Malim*, or writer, in his service, a Christian; I sought him out, entreated him to tell me if he knew any thing about the *rakee*, and if we were really poisoned!

"Oh!" said he, "if you promise not to tell the Aga, I will inform you of every thing. This morning he gave me the bottle to wash, and after having done so, to fill it with *rakee;* it was my ink bottle; I drained out the ink, but I forgot to wash it: this it was which gave a tinge to the *rakee*."

I was delighted at this intelligence; the metallic taste of the liquor was doubtlessly imparted by the copperas in the ink, and was likely to do no serious injury. As my servant heard not this explanation, I resolved on punishing him for laying the fault of the accident on me, by keeping him in suspense a little longer. I told him I had quite recovered; but that I was grieved to see him still look so very ill. I pointed out the cemetery where the three hundred blacks were lying,

and begged of him to make choice of a corner; but he turned away his head, and begged for another emetic, no matter how strong: I could keep my countenance no longer; so I was obliged to set his mind at ease at last.

I was grieved for having wronged our generous host by my suspicions; but, indeed, the appearances were such as almost to warrant them. I saw nothing of the Aga till next morning; he accompanied me to the ruins of the ancient city. The vestiges of a temple, occupying a space one thousand feet long, and seven hundred broad, the remains of a granite *propylon*, and a vast number of prostrate columns and shattered statues are all that remain of the ancient Tanis.

The Androsphynx, excavated by Hamilton, was taken away by Mr. Salt, and from the latter gentleman I received directions to inquire for two colossal statues, found by Mr. Drovetti's agent some months ago, and to examine carefully the state of their preservation. Drovetti wanted to dispose of them. The largest I found behind the temple, a splendid basalt statue of a deity in a sitting posture, one foot only damaged, it measured twenty feet in height; the other was

likewise of black basalt, highly polished, and measured sixteen feet. While I was examining these beautiful statues, an Arab whispered in my ear, to return there without the Aga; I guessed he had some antique to dispose of; I no sooner got rid of my kind companion than I returned to the ruins; the Arab was waiting for me: after a great deal of mystery, he pulled from under his dress a bronze statue of a priest in the act of presenting an offering to a God, beautifully executed, and in good preservation, the hand only was broken which supported the offering; it measured a foot and a half in height, the fellow asked a hundred dollars for it, and it was only after two days haggling that I got it for fourteen. In the time of Josephus, San had fallen sadly from its former splendour. He makes mention of it as "a certain small city," and seems to have forgotten that it was once the seat of empire.

Rae Wilson has erroneously described *Mansoura*, as the Zoan of the sacred volume; Danville, however, and Hamilton, are good authorities, and they describe *San* as the site of the ancient Zoan. "*Samna*," says Danville, "was

the ancient Tanis; it took, in the translation of the Septuagint made in Egypt, the name of *Tzoan*, from which San is derived."

" It is singular, indeed," says Hamilton, " that Josephus should designate, in this way, the ruins of a vast city, which had been rendered so conspicuous by the curses denounced against it by the prophets of his country, and fulfilled by the avenging hand of heaven. But it was now several centuries since the mighty Zoan had been levelled with the dust; and a scene of desolation had succeeded to the abundance and wealth of a metropolis." " It is mentioned in the Itinerary of Antonine as being forty-four miles from Pelusium, which very well agrees with the admeasurements lately made. Larcher, in his notes on the translation of Herodotus, has endeavoured to prove that the ancient name of *Tanis* is only applicable to the island of Thennesus, notwithstanding that the Hebrew *Zoan* is uniformly rendered *Tanis* in the Septuagint."

That it was an ancient city we have the testimony of the Scriptures. " Now *Hebron* was built seven years before *Zoan* in Egypt."

" It was here," says Hamilton, " the Pharaohs

had their splendid palaces; it was here that Moses performed his miracles before them; "Marvellous things did he in the sight of their fathers, in the land of Egypt, in the field of Zoan;" and here, in the vicinity of *Salehie*, lay that pasture land which was the Goshen of the Hebrews.

Bryant, in speaking of the space between the Pelusiac branch and the Red Sea, says, "The Jews who, during the captivity, betook themselves to this country, thought it no despicable spot to settle in."

The country between *San* and *Salehie*, now on the verge of the Desert, I have no doubt, was the Goshen of the Hebrews. To ascertain this point by observation, so far as it was possible, and the channel of the ancient canal, from Suez to the Nile, were the two objects of my route by Salehie and Pelusium to Suez. That San is the site of that Zoan where Moses performed the miracles before Pharaoh, and that the Israelites took their departure from that city, and journeyed through that desert, on the verge of which their Goshen was situated, I take for granted. And when "the children of Israel journeyed from

Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides children," I think there is good reason to believe that their route was from San to *Salehie*, fifteen miles from Zoan; and from thence to the vicinity of the modern Suez. The first account of their arrival, at the Red Sea, is when they "encamp at *Pi-hahiroth*, between Migdol and the Sea, over against Baal-zephon." These cities must have stood on the western coast, from which the Israelites passed over, but they could not have stood twenty miles beyond Suez, on the Abyssinian side; for even ten miles beyond that city there is an iron-bound coast, the mountains of which are almost perpendicular over the sea. Probably the ancient *Kolsoum*, in the vicinity of Suez, marked the site of some one of those Amalekite cities.

But what surprises me a good deal is, that although, on the shores of the Red Sea, we hear of no approach to the names of *Pi-hahiroth*, *Migdol*, and *Baal-zephon*, yet that we should find the city of Migdol, in Egypt, mentioned in the Itinerary of Antonine, as twelve miles distant from Salehie, the ancient *site*.

The *Bahira* also, which is the name given by

the Arabs to the Lake of Menzalè, has some resemblance to the Pi-hahiroth of the Scriptures. At all events, if the names of the Egyptian Migdol and Bahira were found in the vicinity of Suez, a traveller would be almost justified in conjecturing that he had found the site of the first encampment of the Israelites on the shores of the Red Sea.

After waiting at *San* three days for our Bedouin guides, they at last arrived; and, at five the next morning, we set out for Suez. As it was the first time I ever mounted a camel, the motion was excessively disagreeable, and I almost feared I should not be able to proceed; but, by the time we got to *Salehie*, which is about fifteen miles from *San*, I felt more at my ease, and got accustomed to what appeared to me, for the first ten miles, a universal dislocation. We had passed over an uncultivated country, but not a desert; the soil was covered over with a saline crust, like a hoar frost, which impeded vegetation, but did not altogether prevent it. We sometimes travelled along a canal, which runs from Salehie to the mouth of the canal *Moes*, close to the Lake of Menzalè, and which is called *Bahr Aboubergh*.

Salehie is on the verge of the Desert; it is composed of fifteen or sixteen miserable villages, with a population, probably, of eight thousand souls; and these villages are shaded by a long row of date trees, which extend, in a straight line, above five miles.

We found a camp of Bedouins in the adjoining plains, who were of the same tribe as our guides, and with them we remained for the night; we did not wait for an invitation into a tent, we entered the first we met, and we found a welcome.

An Arab woman, who was spinning goats' wool in the interior, gave us the *salaam* of peace, bid us sit down, and removed her two children to the next tent. I purchased a lamb for dinner, which she roasted entire, thrusting a long piece of wood through it, and turning it over a brisk fire of chopped straw and camels' dung; two little Arabs performed the office of turnspits. The savoury odour of my lamb spread through the whole encampment; I was presently surrounded by at least a score of Bedouins. I invited their Sheik and four of their chief men to dinner, and with these, and my two Bedouin guides, I sat down to

my repast; it consisted of a large wooden bowl of boiled rice, in the centre of which was placed the roasted lamb. I saw the eyes of my guests sparkle with pleasure as they surveyed the trencher. They all took their long knives out of their girdles, and deposited them in a circle on the ground; the Sheik then said grace, and to my mind, it was the most impressive thanksgiving I ever witnessed; he took a piece of bread, raised it towards heaven, then put it to his lips, and simply repeated the word "Allah!" In a minute there were five and thirty or forty fingers plunged into the *pilaw**, and speedily as many into the

* It is singular enough that forks should have been unknown in England previous to the reign of James the First, they were brought over from Italy by a traveller, who says, when he first used them in London at dinner, "his friend Isaac Whittaker did pleasantly call him furcifer."

In the reign of Henry the Eighth it appears, by the Chronicles, that knives were so uncommon, that every guest was obliged to bring his own to a dinner party. The habits of the English people, according to the same account, were then filthy in the extreme. So late as the reign of Charles the Second carpets were unknown; the drawingrooms of noblemen were strewed with rushes; the King himself kept a litter of puppies in his bedroom, and it was only with King William that we acquired the cleanly habits of the Dutch.

lamb: but all the hurry prevented not the Sheik from politely picking out the choicest bits and presenting them to me with his greasy fingers.

When dinner was ended, I produced the *rakee* bottle; but not one of them would take a drop. Pipes and coffee pleased them infinitely better, and we sat smoking till ten o'clock. Love stories were related of young men who entertained the fatal passion for girls of another tribe, and how they pined till they had no shadows, and their faces became as small as olives. I sang an Arab song which I learned in Upper Egypt, called "*By awani*," a favourite sentimental air of theirs, and never were people so delighted. They swore I was no Christian, to flatter me; that I was good enough to be a Bedouin; and I so completely gained the heart of the old Sheik, that he actually besought me to remain with him. He said God made me for a Bedouin; and that I should have the best Arab horse of his, if I remained. He swore by his beard, he would give me not only a horse, but a tent likewise, and that I should be as his own son!

"But what am I to do," said I, "for a harem? you know I do not *sully*, and what wo-

man would marry a man who does not perform the ablutions?"

"*Allah Karim*," said the good old Bedouin: "God will make you a believer in course of time, and my own daughter shall be your wife, if you consent to join our tribe."

"But," said I, "what would my father and mother think of me, if I stayed away from them in their old age?"

"If you had a father," replied the Sheik, "you would not have left him to wander in the Desert! What business have you in it,—to see the sands? to look upon the sky? have you not the sand and the sky in your own country? and if your father's beard was grey, would you abandon him to visit the poor Bedouins?" "*Bedowee mesquin!*"

I hardly knew what answer to make to this simple observation; he saw that my thoughts were far away, and with true Bedouin courtesy, he endeavoured to make amends for what he conceived to be the occasion of a painful reminiscence.

"*Malesh hawadgi malesh!*" he replied in a good-humoured tone, "it is no matter; perhaps they treated you badly; perhaps they did not

love you; your face, perhaps, was black to them; but it shines here; and you shall have a horse and a gun, and a tent, and a harem, if you remain with us."

"Had I not been bound to my own country by one or two indissoluble ties, I verily believe I should have become a Bedouin; and at this moment have been an inhabitant of the Wilderness. I was delighted with their simplicity, with their hospitality, and above all with their independence. That independence which they have preserved from time immemorial is reflected on their features from their hearts; and the dignity of their countenances, and the nobleness of their gait, distinguish both the men and women of their tribes from every other race of Egyptian and Syrian Arabs. The women in general are bold looking, but have good features and majestic figures; they seldom have more than three children, and I never found the number exceed five*;

* Mr. Brown, the librarian of the late Sir Joseph Banks, tells me, "the women of some tribes of the Hottentots never have more than two children; and, indeed, that they could not provide for a greater number." Mr. Brown was astonished to find that the men of those tribes were incapable of counting numbers beyond four; he could not make them understand the possibility of reckoning on their fingers beyond 1, 2, 3, 4.

their fertility is proportioned to their barren soil, and illustrates the observation of Malthus, "that the population of every country is in a ratio with its resources."

The Bedouins appeared to me to have a greater contempt for physic than any other people of the East. The women are great herbalists, but the men have little faith in drugs; they very seldom applied to me for medicine: The fact is, they have very few diseases; so far as I could learn, they have fewer than any other people. Gout, ophthalmia, plague, typhus fever, hydrophobia, toothach, pulmonary consumption, hooping cough, rickets, stone, and erysipelas, they hardly know by name in the interior of the Wilderness. Small-pox, measles, biliary obstructions, jaundice, the real inflammatory fever, or synocha of Cullen, are common enough. I saw two cases of the latter terminate fatally within eight-and-forty hours of the attack; one between *Salehie* and San, and another in the vicinity of Suez.

This fever in the Desert arises, I imagine, from sudden exposure to the rays of the sun. One of my camel-drivers was attacked during the journey; he complained suddenly of intense pain in

the back of the head; he laid his finger on the spot, and from the moment of this seizure he had a burning fever. I bled him largely, much against his will and that of his companions; but he was well in four days.

All the symptoms of this complaint are those of coup de soleil in an aggravated form. I saw one woman labouring under dropsy; some children with herpetic eruptions; and what surprised me a good deal to find in the Wilderness, was syphilis in many of its horrid forms, but in no one instance were the bones affected, though the disease had existed for ten and twelve years; and in no one instance, though the sores had made frightful progress in the neighbouring parts, did the constitution appear to have been infected. Whether these phenomena arose from the non-employment of mercurials, or from the modification of disease by climate, I cannot say; but such are the facts.

The Bedouins seldom remain above a month in one place: they wander about the Desert from well to well. When their flocks have eaten up what little verdure there is in one *wady*, they strike their tents and set out for another. The

furniture of their camp is very little: a couple of copper boilers, two small grinding stones, a leather bag to churn milk in, some water skins, a wooden bowl, a goblet or two of tin or horn, a mat, and sometimes a coffee-pot are all the earthly possessions of a Bedouin, beside his cattle and his fire-arms. The fewness of his wants constitute his independence; and the contrast between the interior of his tent and that of a London drawing-room is so great, that it is difficult to convince oneself that beings of the same species can be so diametrically opposed in their modes of living.

After a good night's rest, I was preparing for our departure at the dawn; but I found our guides in no hurry to set out. They told me it would be impossible to proceed on our journey; that a *Kamsin* wind was setting in, and would continue till three in the afternoon.

I endeavoured to prevail on them to set out, but they absolutely refused to move; so I returned to my tent, and awaited the *Kamsin* patiently. At eight o'clock it set in with a vengeance: the sun was obscured by yellow clouds; the air was loaded with particles of sand; breathing became difficult, the mouth parched, the skin dry, and a

feeling of universal debility prevailed. I could hardly lift my head from the ground, and the sand was driving in furiously with the wind through every crevice in the tent. The sensation was inexpressibly distressing: it was not the degree of heat which occasioned it; for in Upper Egypt I had suffered an equally high temperature, without any such prostration of strength and spirits. But the hot wind of the Desert I believe to be connected with an electrical state of the atmosphere, which has a depressing influence on the nervous system.

The thermometer at two o'clock rose to 110° in the shade; and on putting the bulb in the sand, outside the tent, in a few minutes the mercury was at 135°. All the forenoon the tent was more like an oven than any thing else; but at half-past three, about the time predicted by the Bedouins, it ceased altogether. The yellow tint of the sky gradually disappeared; but I was so exhausted, that I deferred my departure till the following morning. I found the sand had penetrated every where in my books and clothes, which were tied up in a hair skin sack, and even in my watch-case there was sand.

I visited the Sheik in the afternoon; he showed me his Arab stud, which consisted of one genuine Arab mare and five or six Dongola horses; these were tied to a stake, opposite his tent, by the fore legs, which were kept fastened by a strap over the fetlock. They never lie down night or day, they are always kept standing, and even after a long journey are only suffered to give a tumble or two on the sand, and then made to rise. This custom prevails all over Egypt. A real Arab steed is worth from three to five hundred pounds. The mares only are prized, and these must neither bite nor kick, or they are deemed vicious; indeed, they are so free from vice that it is common to see the Bedouin children playing under their bellies.

When an Arab sells his mare he rarely sells all his property in her; he disposes of what he calls a third or a fourth; which is merely a reservation of the second or third foal for himself or his family. Their genealogy must be proved at *Mekka*, for one race only is valued, which is that of the Prophet's favourite mare. Mahomet, it is said, prized this animal for refusing to drink after a long journey in the Desert, when he called

his stud from the well, and this mare was the only one to leave the water. It is so difficult to get a thorough-bred Arab mare to send out of the country, that I doubt if any ever go to England.

All the Franks who deal in horses, both in Syria and Egypt, are great knaves; some of the horses which I have seen them embark for England, as real Arab steeds, were common Dongola horses, worth in Lower Egypt from thirty to forty pounds each. These horses stand no hardship; they can hardly be taken out of the stable twice a day for a few miles' ride without knocking them up.

I started next day at the dawn; every trace of vegetation soon disappeared, and nothing but sand and sky was to be seen. About ten miles from *Salehie*, on our right, in the Desert, we passed an ancient structure, which the Arabs call *Beit Pharoon*, the house of Pharaoh; the ruins are colossal; but I could perceive no sculpture, no hieroglyphics. I know of no traveller who makes mention of these remains; probably they are Jewish, and mark the western boundary of Goshen. From twelve o'clock till two we reposed; the sun

was intensely hot, and the umbrella which formed my tent did not afford a great deal of shade. We started again at two, and at eight in the evening we came to a *wady*, where my Bedouins expected to find good water; the well was surrounded by verdure, a few date trees were scattered here and there: and to this miserable spot one of my Arabs gave the name of a beautiful garden; comparatively speaking, perhaps he was in the right.

We took our station for the night behind a date tree; our camels were tied in front, and our baggage hemmed us in at the sides. A large fire was made in the centre, in the red ashes of which our bread was to be baked; the process of kneading and baking did not occupy ten minutes; one of the Bedouins spread a sheep's skin on the sand, on this he placed the flour, six or seven pounds, added as much water as was necessary, and a handful of salt, formed it into a large cake, which he placed on the red ashes, covered it over with the same, and in a very few minutes it was done. This with three or four onions constituted our repast, and a most excellent one it was: coffee followed, for each small cup forty berries were roasted in a copper vessel, pounded in a corner

of a turban between two stones, and then put into the boiling water, and after having been thrice boiled, better coffee was produced than we ever get in England. The dew fell so heavy, that all my things were wet through.

In the morning the Bedouins gave me two counsels before starting, never to sleep in the Desert with my head uncovered, and never to drink in the daytime if I could avoid it; and this advice I firmly believe would have preserved many Europeans from fatal maladies, had they been thus warned of the danger.

The Arabs universally believe that the beams of the moon are noxious to the human body, and the Levantines in Egypt have the same opinion; perhaps there is some truth in the assertion. I have seen my Arab boatmen on the Nile frequently attacked with ophthalmia and catarrh, avowedly from this cause; they have found their heads uncovered in the morning by accident, and in a few hours more they would complain of sore eyes, "from exposure to the moon:" strange as this may seem, I really believe that there is some influence more than that of common dampness in the nights here, which the Arabs wisely guard

against, by enveloping their heads in their thick blankets. The other counsel I subsequently found a very wise one; the more a traveller drinks during the day, when exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, the more thirsty he gets, and finally, these copious draughts have a prejudicial effect on health; at night it is no matter how much one drinks, indeed the more he takes the less thirsty he is likely to be next day; for this reason you see the Bedouins following the example of their camels, laying in a stock of water for the journey over night.

The water of the well here was dreadfully fetid, but we were obliged to take a provision of it. Next day we travelled all day long without seeing a single tree, or the smallest patch of verdure, or laying our eyes on any living being. At ten o'clock at night we reached another *wady*, with a well of bad water at the foot of the mountain, which we had been skirting all day; next morning we continued our route along these barren mountains till evening. The soil was no longer sandy, but of a hard gravel, on which a carriage might be rolled two thirds of the way from *Salehie* to Suez. At night we stopped at a well without

water, and here I examined the soil, three feet below the surface; two feet deep there is a superficial stratum of calcareous pebbles, and below that a solid bed of limestone, which I believe to be the basis of the soil of all Egypt.

The following morning we started at half past two, it was a long day's journey to *Adjerond*, which is within ten miles of Suez. We arrived there in the evening, very much fatigued and very much in want of water; one of our skins containing the sweet water of the Nile burst the day before, and left us nothing but the putrid water of the well, with which we filled two skins. We had now journeyed in the Wilderness three days without meeting a human being, and without seeing any living creature.

With all my endeavours to resist the delusion of the *Mirage*, I found it quite impossible this day to persuade myself that my senses did not deceive me. At one moment, the rippled surface of a lake was before my eyes; at another time, a thick plantation appeared on either side of me; the waving of the branches was to be seen, and this view was only changed for that of a distant glimpse of a city; the mosques and minarets

were distinct, and several times I asked my Bedouins if that were not *Suez* before us; but they laughed at me, and said it was all sand; and what appeared to me a city, a forest, or a lake, the nearer I endeavoured to approach it the farther it seemed to recede, till at last it vanished altogether, "like the baseless fabric of a vision, leaving not a wreck behind."

If I were to speak of the nature of the *Mirage* from my own sensations, I should say, it was more a mental hallucination than a deception of the sight; for although I was aware of the existence of the Mirage, I could not prevail on myself to believe that the images which were painted on my retina were only reflected, like those in a dream, from the imagination; and yet so it was. At Adjerond, probably the ancient *Serapeum*, we met a caravan of sixty camels, bound, like ourselves, for Suez; but the lateness of the hour obliged both them and us to take up our quarters for the night at the well.

The caravan consisted chiefly of pilgrims going to the Holy City, and a vast number of public women, professed *Alme;* of these I counted fourteen, and I did not see them all. I thought their

licentious dances and conversation likely to inspire a very different sort of devotion from that which pious pilgrims ought to feel; but religion is made the pander of the vilest passions in Turkey; and the devotee who abandons his wife and family, and hazards his existence, to visit the shrine of his prophet, scruples not to make a prostitute the companion of his pilgrimage.

My Bedouins bid me look well to my baggage, and to sleep (as they expressed it) with my eyes open. I took the hint, and did not sleep at all. Towards midnight I perceived a demure old hadgi, with a long beard, sitting down by my baggage; by and by I saw one of my pistols drawn very gently from the belt, and then the other: I bounced on my feet and seized hold of the fellow, crying out at the same time for my Bedouins. The old gentleman was quite astonished; he protested he only came to examine the pistols, nothing more. I bid him go about his business, and took the pistols out of his hands. He went away, cursing me for a *Giaour*, and I found there was a general feeling of animosity towards me in the morning on the part of the devout pilgrims,

for presuming to detect a Moslem in the act of thieving.

I was glad to leave these religious hadgis at the dawn, and in about four hours we passed *Birket el Suez*, a well which formerly supplied the city, and shortly after we entered Suez. During the journey I had often occasion to wonder how it was possible for the Bedouins to follow the proper route without a single landmark, without one trace in the sand to guide them, as in the first day's journey, without observing either sun or stars, without knowing the use of a compass. It appeared to me as if they studied nothing but keeping in a straight course, neither deviating to the right nor to the left, and looking back occasionally to observe their track and correct their course when they erred; in short, they appeared to shape their course by their wake, as mariners reckon their leeway by it.

To what cause is the accumulation of sand in the Desert to be attributed? did it always exist there and occupy the same extent of surface? or, is its origin owing to the want of cultivation, and to the effects of depopulation? The sight of the

wide ocean of the Wilderness naturally suggests these questions, but their solution is neither easy nor obvious. Desaix endeavoured to settle the difficulty, like a French philosopher, and arrived *per saltum* at the sweeping conclusion, that nature expended all her art in the perfection of the rest of the world, and left the Desert but half made up.

This explanation is not very satisfactory; and, for want of a better, perhaps you will suffer me to offer my opinion on the subject. The Deserts I imagine, from the peculiarity of their situations, were the last places from which the waters of the Deluge retired; consequently the deposition of sand, in those places, was much greater than elsewhere. This sand is identical with that of the ocean, it is formed of the same transparent particles of quartz and silex. In all probability, in ancient times, it did not occupy the tenth part of the surface which it now does; but when population diminished and cultivation ceased, the sands in the interior were dispersed by the prevailing winds, particularly those of the north and west, over the plains, and the soil, for want of irrigation, became an arid surface: plantation,

which above all impedes the accumulation of sand beyond it, when no longer attended to, favoured the desolation of the land.

On the seacoast, particularly of Egypt, the flatness of the country allows a free passage to the winds, which come loaded from the shore with particles of sand. This I particularly remarked on the shores of Rosetta and Damietta, near the Boghas, the setting up of a small stick on the shore would be a sufficient *nucleus*, in the course of a few months, for the formation of a mountain of sand. One thing is certain, that wherever there is water, no matter in what part of the Wilderness, there vegetation is to be found. The stopping up of canals, and the want of irrigation, are the great causes of desolation which favour the extension of the Desert.

The country from San to Salehie, and probably to Suez, was formerly a cultivated country: the ruins of palaces, such as those of Zoan and that of the *Beit Pharoon*, now in the middle of the Desert, prove that the country around them must have been cultivated, and that at a very short period before our era.

But though I have brought you into the Wil-

derness, I must not lead you into a labyrinth of speculations on its formation: I have, perhaps, something of more interest to say to you of Suez, and of the route of the Israelites, but this I must defer till I again have the pleasure of addressing you.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXIV.

TO THE REV. D. M'PHERSON.

MY DEAR SIR, Damietta, July 1, 1827.

THE town of *Suez* is a miserable place of abode, hemmed in between the arid Desert and a boisterous sea. There is not a spring within several miles of it, nor any sort of verdure in its vicinity. The water is carried from *El Naba*, near the fountains of Moses, seven or eight miles from *Suez*, and the provisions are brought from *Cairo;* the Governor has the water he drinks brought from the latter place, a distance of eighty miles, and he calculates the cost at a piastre a glassful.

The water of *El Naba*, though the best in the neighbourhood, has a saline bitter taste, which it is difficult to distinguish from that of a solution of glauber salts. It affected my stomach the first day, and shortly after produced a ringworm on

my cheek, which occupied half my face; it increased daily in size, till it at length reached the lower eyelid. I thought it high time to check its progress, and this I accomplished, after trying a variety of remedies, by rubbing the surface with diluted muriatic acid thrice a day; the pain of the application was considerable, but the disease was wholly removed in the course of four days.

Suez is the *Sierra Leon* of Egypt: importunate Turks are appointed to offices, which they seldom live to enjoy long. Every one complains of ill health; the burning sun and the bitter water, in a short time, undermine the strongest constitutions. I believe there was not a respectable inhabitant of Suez who did not apply to me for advice. Diseased liver was very common, but enlargement of the spleen* was much more so. On this side of the Red Sea *plague* is little known, its ravages

* In all places where remittent, and especially intermittent fevers prevail, I found the spleen invariably affected; and, lately, in Rome, I had an opportunity of seeing the bodies of several patients opened, who had died of the malaria intermittent in the hospital of San Spirito; in every one of these the spleen was enlarged, sometimes occupying half the abdomen.

are not to be traced beyond *Suez*, but on the Eastern shore, pestilence is to be found so high as Mekka.

The ships from India formerly discharged their cargoes at Suez, but *Jedda* and Coseir are now the great dépôts for Indian commerce, and *Suez* has consequently declined. There is still, however, some little trade carried on here with *India* and the *Hedjaz*, and the most extraordinary diversity of colour and costume I ever witnessed, I noticed here. The independent Bedouin paraded the streets on his Arab mare, enveloped in his *bernous*, and his long gun slung over his shoulder; the brawny Mugrebbin, with his shrill voice and ferocious aspect, formed a contrast with the slender Indian, with his tawdry attire and his effeminate features; the humbled arrogance of the *Wahabee* was to be distinguished from the subdued ferocity of the Abyssinian Christian, and the dress of each was as varied as his creed; the complexion of each was peculiar to his clime, but the passions of all were common to human nature.

The situation of *Suez*, in a commercial point of

view, is excellent, lying nearly at the extremity of the Arabian Gulf; it is only three days' journey from Cairo, five and a half from Damietta, eight from Hebron, the modern *Kalyl*, ten days from Jerusalem, two days and a half from the *Hamam Pharoon*, and five from Sinai.

One of my first objects at Suez was to ascertain if the sea was fordable opposite the town at ebb tide; the consular agent and the Levantine writers of the Governor assured me that it was not; but I attached little importance to their assertions. I therefore desired my servant to find me out any Indian sailor who wished to earn a dollar by crossing the Gulf: at eight in the evening a man made his appearance who offered to make the attempt. I explained to him the nature of the object I wanted to ascertain; I directed him to walk straight across, as far as it was possible to do so, and to hold his hands over his head as he walked along. He was in the water forthwith, he proceeded slowly and steadily, his hands above his head, and in nine minutes he was at the other side of the Red Sea. On his return he told me what I knew to be a fact, that he had walked every step across, the deepest part being about the middle of

the Gulf, when the water was up to his chin. I proceeded now to follow his course; I gave him another dollar to cross over before me, and as I was nearly eight inches taller than my guide, where his chin was in the water my long beard was quite dry.

The tide was now coming in fast, and by the time we reached the middle of the sea my Indian thought it imprudent to proceed further as I could not boast of being an expert swimmer. Had we remained ten minutes longer, we should inevitably have suffered Pharaoh's fate; for the opposite bank was perceptibly diminishing, and at ten o'clock the sea, which was hardly more than the breadth of the Thames at London Bridge two hours before, was now from two to three miles broad. I returned perfectly convinced that the Red Sea, opposite Suez, is passable at ebb tide.

By a mark which I made on a perpendicular rock on the seaside, about eighty paces from the spot we forded, I found the difference between the ebb and flow to be six feet two inches. The fountains of *Moses*, above *El Naba*, are about seven miles from Suez by water, but by land the the distance is double.

Five miles to the north of Suez the sea terminates in a narrow creek and saline marsh, which it is necessary to wind round in going by land to *El Naba*. Niebuhr says he walked across this creek at ebb tide, and was only knee deep in water. The Bedouins do this daily, but I am not aware that any European before me ever attempted the passage of the sea opposite Suez; indeed, the very inhabitants considered it impracticable till I proved the contrary.

I intended proceeding by land to Sinai, but this did not at all meet the views of the British agent, an intriguing Greek Levantine, who was very desirous that I should pay fifty dollars for the hire of a boat, of which he was part owner. I refused to do this, and the consequence was, that the very man whose duty it was to remove every impediment to my journey, was the person who prevented me from reaching my destination.

He found out from my servant that I had no particular firman for visiting the Red Sea, and this information he secretly gave to the Governor. When I had every thing prepared for my journey, I received an order from the Governor not to go beyond Suez: I taxed the agent with his perfidy,

but he swore that he was quite ignorant of the order; however, on remonstrating with the Governor, he acknowledged that the Consul (as he called this knave) was opposed to my journey, and that without a firman from the Pacha I could not proceed to *Sinai:* I might however visit *El Naba*, and the country one day's journey round it. After telling our agent pretty frankly what I thought of his conduct, I set out for *El Naba;* I arrived at "the fountains of Moses" after a pleasant sail of two hours; the water of all the sources was equally bad; one of them I ascertained to be a chalybeate. But at the bottom of the hill there is a small well which is less bitter than the others; yet this water likewise becomes putrid when kept for two or three days. From *El Naba* we coasted along the plain of *El Atha* for four hours, in the direction of south east; we passed the mountains of Tyh, and the valley of Seder; and in three hours more we reached the valley of Amara, and stopped to visit the bitter well of Howara: had we travelled by land, the journey would have taken fifteen hours.

It is singular that the valley of Amara should have preserved its ancient name, both in the

Hebrew and Arabic. *Amara* signifies bitterness. This valley, in all probability, is the desert of three days, mentioned in the Scriptures, which the Israelites crossed after the passage of the Red Sea, and at the end of which they arrived at *Marah*. Burckhardt to this observation added his opinion, " that the Israelites moving in so large a body might well be supposed to have occupied three days in the march: and the bitter well at *Marah*, which was sweetened by Moses, corresponds exactly with that of Howara. This is the usual route to Sinai, and was probably therefore that which the Israelites took on their escape from Egypt, provided it be admitted that they crossed the sea near Suez, as Niebuhr with good reason conjectures. There is no other road of three days march in the way from Suez to Sinai; nor is there any other absolutely bitter well on the whole of this coast as far as Ras Mohammed."

As I could not proceed beyond the valley of *Amara*, I was forced to content myself with learning from the Bedouins, that *Wady Garendel*, the ancient *Elim*, according to Niebuhr and Burckhardt, was only four hours distant: *Hamam*

Pharoon a day's journey from the valley of *Amara*, and Gebel Tor, or Mount Sinai, four days' more. The Hamam Pharoon, or Bath of Pharaoh, is generally believed to be the spot where the Israelites passed over, and where Pharaoh met his fate. Makrizi, who wrote his history in the fifteenth century according to Burckhardt, makes mention of this place in these terms, " Faran is one of the towns of the Amalekites, situated near the borders of the sea of *Kolsoum*, upon a hill between two mountains, on each of which are numberless excavations full of corpses. It is one day's journey distant in a straight line from the sea, the shore of which is there called the shore of the sea of *Faran:* there it was that Pharaoh was drowned by the Almighty." All authors agree that this was not the *Paran* of Moses, which was probably situated to the west of Wady Mousa. But Makrizi was mistaken in supposing that the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea was at the *Hamam Pharoon:* this I know is the received opinion, but it is very much to be doubted. On the western shore, opposite the Hamam Pharoon, there is an iron bound coast almost perpendicular over the sea, where the six

hundred thousand Israelites, and "the host, and the horsemen" of Pharaoh, and his six hundred chosen chariots would have difficulty to find sufficient space to muster, much less to encamp; and indeed ten miles beyond Suez, I saw no part of the western coast which admitted of a numerous host between the mountains and the sea; one chain succeeds another from a little way below Suez to Abyssinia, forming an almost inaccessible barrier between the Desert and the sea, the *Zafaran*, the *Kalzim*, the *Agrib*, and *Jaffalin* mountains. Opposite the *Hamam Pharoon*, the breadth of the sea is from twenty to six and twenty miles, and the exposure of the sea just here to the fury of three different winds renders the navigation now so dangerous, that scarcely a week passes without the wreck of a bark.

Dr. Adam Clarke, in his learned Commentary on the Scriptures, has traced a new passage over the Red Sea, or, at least, has revived an old one, of which Shaw had the first merit. The doctor, in his map of the journeyings of the Israelites, has placed the passage across the sea, about sixty miles distant from the *Hamam Pharoon*,

in the direction of Suez, where the Gulf is twelve miles broad, and fourteen fathoms deep. I know not on what authority he has placed the Hebrew Goshen, which he acknowledges to be in the land of Rameses, close to Suez; and the important district of *Salehie* he has set down in two places. The agency of the easterly wind, in causing the waters to retire or to divide, he rejects as an impious suggestion, albeit the Scriptures inform us, " And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided." But Doctor Clarke, bestows a vast deal of erudition to support the puerile opinion, " that the east wind, which was ever regarded as a parching burning wind, was used after the division of the waters, merely to dry the bottom and render it passable." The situation, however, which Dr. Clarke has pointed out in his map, as that from which the Israelites passed over the gulf, is not very well adapted for the assemblage of three millions two hundred and sixty three thousand souls, for at this number he averages the children of

Israel. The course is traced on the map over a chain of mountains, which is close to the beach.

In short, there is no other point but that of *Suez*, from which so immense a body as that of the Israelites could have passed over the sea without the further miracle of removing mountains. I do not hold the preservation of the Israelites to be one degree less miraculous, because the wind or the tide drove back the waters, to let them pass at *Suez*, and that the same natural causes were ordained by God to overwhelm the Egyptians.

I believe that infinite Wisdom in the operation of miracles is pleased to consider our finite faculties, and to make natural agents the instruments of his divine power. The learned Bishop Patrick, who, I presume, was an orthodox divine, considered that the common interpretation of many passages relative to the Exodus was such as "to encumber the text with difficulties." Amongst other things, the *Selavim* of the Jews, he contended, were not quails, but locusts. His reasons for thinking so are three:—"Their coming by a wind, their immense quantities, covering

a circle of thirty or forty miles, two cubits thick, and their being spread in the sun for drying, which would have been preposterous had they been quails, as it would have made them corrupt the sooner." But this, he says, is the principal way of preparing locusts to keep for a month or more, when they are boiled, or otherwise dressed.

There is one good reason for thinking they were locusts, and that is, that quails are very rarely seen in the Desert between the valley of *Amara*, and *Ain Mousa*, and that locusts are common enough. The *Towara* Arabs do not eat them, but the people of the *Hedjaz* dry them in the sun, pound them, and make of this flour a species of bread. The great objection of Dr. Clarke to Bishop Patrick's opinion of the impossibility of drying quails in the sun, without inducing putrefaction, is the evidence of Maillet, that fish is so dried in Egypt without salt. The fish I saw cured on the lake Menzalè was first sprinkled with brine, and then dried in the sun; and that sort of *hung beef* which the Turks call *pasturma*, and which is said to be cured by simply drying it in the sun, is likewise sprinkled with salt.

In Egypt the *Tetrao Coturnix*, or quail, is extremely plentiful; in the corn season the numbers are prodigious; they are taken in a net, and are sold at a very low price in Alexandria and Rosetta. But I have seen a greater abundance of quails in the island of Capri, opposite Naples, than even in Egypt.

Whether the manna which exudes from the tamarisk be the manna which "the Lord gave the Israelites for bread," admits of some doubt; but the analogy in the name and properties of both is so striking, that I must give you what information I could collect from the Bedouins on the subject. The few tamarisks which I saw at *Ain Mousa* and *Wady Amara* are of a stunted growth, and produce very little manna. I only found one particle of that substance, weighing about a drachm, in all my route, and that was at *Amara*. The Bedouins tell me the name of it is *Mann;* that it is found near *Gebel Tor* in great quantities in the morning; and that it only exudes during the night. Burckhardt's account is nearly similar, but more at length. *Wady Sheik*, he says, is the only valley in the peninsula where the tamarisk,

or tarfa tree, abounds. Mr. Seetzen first noticed the accurate resemblance of the *mann* of the Arabs to that of the Israelites. In June it drops from the thorns* of the tree on the scattered leaves and twigs beneath; it coagulates before sunrise, and is then removed, for it dissolves with the heat of the sun. The Arabs, he says, boil it, and, after straining, pour it into leathern bags, to preserve till the next year, and then use it as we do honey. He procured some at the convent of *Sinai*, which dissolved when he placed it in the sun, and became solid again when he put it in a cool place.

The quantity collected at present, he says, in the Wady el Sheik, exceeds not five or six hundred pounds, even in a wet season. If this be the substance which was the bread of the Israelites for forty years, the tamarisk tree must have abounded in those places which are now desolate. The

* Mr. Brown, the celebrated botanist, informs me, there is a small thorny shrub abounding in the Desert of Arabia, which produces much more manna than the tamarisk, and that it is found in great abundance in Persia. It is unnecessary to say, that the manna of this thorny shrub, and likewise that of the tamarisk, is totally different from the manna of commerce, that of the *fraxinus ornus*.

commands of the Lord were, "Gather of it every man according to his eating: an omer for every man according to the number of your persons." Now an omer was a measure of three English quarts, and the multitude to be fed was, according to Dr. Clarke, three millions two hundred and sixty-three thousand.

And if three quarts of manna were daily required for every one of these three millions two hundred and sixty-three thousand souls, I must confess all the tamarisks on the surface of the earth would not suffice to produce the necessary quantity of manna.

But Dr. Clarke, I apprehend, has an Arab notion of numbers. When a Bedouin wishes to express the word many, he generally makes use of the term *erbeen*, forty; when he talks of his tribe, he points to the stars, and says they are innumerable; they are forty thousand strong; when, probably, their numbers do not amount to four hundred.

All the people of the East have this hyperbolical mode of describing numbers, the Levantines especially. A rich merchant has always "forty

thousand dollars if he have one." The Consul's cousin at Damietta complimented me by solemnly asserting that I had the skill of forty thousand hakkims. The good man meant not in reality that the skill of forty thousand hakkims was embodied in one individual; he only wished to say, that I did him more service than the last barber who attended him. You never inquire of an Arab the number of soldiers in a village, that he does not magnify half a dozen into forty. Falstaff's eleven men in buckram are nothing to the forty thousand cyphers in every Arab sum, whether of persons or paras.

The various species of serpents and venomous reptiles which harassed the Israelites are still to be encountered in the Wilderness. The "*hornets*" are unknown by that name; but the description given of them in the Scriptures is so evidently that of scorpions, which still abound here, that I have no doubt the name of *hornets* is erroneously applied. "The fiery serpents" which "the Lord sent among the people," in the Arabic version of the Bible, are, as Burckhardt has observed, more correctly rendered "serpents of burning bites;"

and in the neighbourhood of *Gebel Tor* and the *Wady Gerandel* the Bedouins are very much afraid of them.

The winged serpent, which naturalists deem a fabulous reptile, several Bedouins have assured me they had seen in the *Hedjaz;* and I remember having heard the same from an English traveller at Cairo, in the house of Mr. Burton, who stated that he had seen the winged serpent in the Arabian Desert, and described it, as well as I remember, as a small species of the serpent, and which was able to fly a few feet only above the surface.

On my return to Suez, the more I reflected on the course I pursued from San to the Red Sea, the more I was convinced that the route of the Israelites was from the vicinity of *Pælusium*, which with *Zoan*, or *San*, formed part of the ancient Rameses, and by *Salehie*, on the skirt of the Desert, which I presume to be the Hebrew *Succoth*, or place of tents, and which, I imagine, was situated in Goshen, close to Rameses.

The supposition that the Israelites journeyed from the city on which Cairo now stands is

grounded on the conjecture that Letopolis was situated in Rameses, and that old Cairo marks the site of Babylon, as the adjoining village of *Metarièh* marks the ruins of Heliopolis; of this there is no manner of proof, no inscription has ever been found in either places to warrant the antiquary in fixing precisely the sites of Babylon and Letopolis.

There is another *Metarièh* on the lake Menzalè, where I discovered the ruins of some considerable city. Lardner affirms that Heliopolis was in the Delta, and endeavours to prove, from Strabo's description of it, that it could not be situated near Cairo. Bryant, speaking of old and new Cairo, and of the Heliopolitan and Letopolitan names, says, " there were no names nor places of repute in that part of Egypt. Cellarius speaks of *Phacusa*, *Bubastis*, and *Heliopolis* as being in *Arabia;* and in D'Anville's excellent map I find *Phacusa* placed close to *Zoan* and *Menzalè*. Some ancient authors assert that there were two cities of Heliopolis; there certainly were two cities called Latopolis, one of which was changed to Letopolis; and there still exist two villages bearing the name

of *Metarièh*, of which that near Cairo is commonly supposed to be the site of Heliopolis; and, it must be acknowledged, that the Itinerary of Antonine favours that conjecture.

My opinion that the *Israelites* took their departure from Egypt by *San* and *Salehie* is grounded on the fact, that the Jews chiefly inhabited that part of Egypt. Niebuhr found many traces of their habitations in the *Delta;* in the neighbourhood of *Salehie* I observed the same. On the authority of Hamilton it was at *San*, the ancient Zoan, that Moses performed the miracles before Pharaoh. In an old map I find Zoan situated in Rameses, on the shores of *Menzalè*; and, lastly, the route by San and Salehie was the most direct from Lower Egypt, which Josephus informs us had always been the abode of the Jews. "Now they took their journey," he says, "by Letapolis, a place at that time deserted, but where Babylon was built afterwards." He proceeds to give an account of their departure, and of the abilities of Moses as a leader: he represents him as having been a general in the Egyptian army, and of having conquered the Ethiopians; of being subse-

quently obliged to fly from the fury of Pharaoh to Midian, on the coast of the Red Sea; of his there marrying Jethro's daughter, and becoming the father of two children: on Pharaoh's death, of his returning to Egypt, after having visited Mount Sinai while he tended his father-in-law's flocks, and of his leading forth the children of Israel (in his eightieth year, by God's command), who had been employed in making bricks and building pyramids; of the Egyptians pursuing them with an army of two hundred and fifty thousand men, and six hundred chariots; of the passage of the Jews across the sea in one night, while the Egyptians were putting on their armour; and, when they followed, of their destruction by the sea flowing "in a torrent raised by storms of wind."

Such are the exact particulars of the account given by Josephus, and he finishes his description of the passage of the Israelites with these words: "As for myself I have delivered every part of this history as I found it in the sacred books; nor let any one wonder at the strangeness of the narration, if a way were opened to those men of old time, who were free from the wickedness of modern

ages, whether it happened by the will of God or by its own accord, while, for the sake of those who accompanied Alexander, King of Macedonia, who yet lived comparatively but a little while ago, the Pamphylian Sea retired, and afforded them a passage through itself when they had no other way to go; I mean, when it was the will of God to destroy the monarchy of the Persians. And this is confessed to be true by all that have written about the actions of Alexander; but as to these events, let every one determine as he pleases."

At the extremity of the Gulf of Suez, five or six miles from the town, I observed the remains of the ancient canal which joined the Nile: the bank, on the eastern side, is from eight to ten feet high, and the breadth of the canal appears to have been thirty feet; it runs north north west, and, on the route from Salehie, its course may be traced for half a day in that direction. The saline marshes which extend fifteen or eighteen miles from Suez, in the direction of Salehie, mark its bed. Hamilton thought he saw the termination of this canal in the Nile, near Belbeis, and Burckhardt has laid down its course in the direction of Belbeis,

but I believe it terminated in the Pelusiac branch of the Nile near Salehie; for here, on the left of our route, towards Suez, I found the bed of an ancient canal, much wider than any of the modern ones; and, as I could trace its course in a southerly direction for about fifty yards, I thought it very probable that it was the continuation of the canal from Suez. Consequently its course, in Burckhardt's map, is too much to the west; instead of turning off towards Belbeis, it should be traced north north west, in the direction of Salehie. Strabo speaks of this canal falling into the Pelusiac branch of the Nile, and of its being anterior to the siege of Troy; other authors ascribe its construction to Necho, and its perfection to one of the Ptolemies.

From Suez I returned to Damietta: we fell in with a horde of Bedouin robbers near *Adjeronde*, but they used us like "thieves of mercy:" my guides passed me off for a Turkish Hadgi, and my long black beard, I believe, saved my baggage. They protested, while they were overhauling my luggage, which was that of a pauper, that they did not want to rob me of a paras, God

forbid! "Min Allah!" but they merely wished to borrow a little tobacco and a little coffee, and they took all I had of both: I put the best face on the robbery, and we parted in good humour. I arrived in Damietta in five days, and here I now am, waiting the departure of the first ship for Syria.

My dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXV.

TO JOHN ELMSLIE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Tyre, August 20, 1827.

THERE being, at present, no "highway out of Assyria into Egypt," the traveller has to embark at *Alexandria* or *Damietta* for *Beirout* or *Sour*, the ancient Tyre. The journey by land over the Desert is wearisome and perilous: a packsaddle on the back of a camel is a miserable substitute for a mail coach, and "a howling wilderness" is an awful route for one who has been accustomed to *Macadamized* roads. I crossed the *bogaz* of Damietta in an open boat, to get on board a vessel bound for Syria, which lay about seven miles from the shore. The sea, on the bar of the bogaz, was terrific: at all times the passage is dangerous; but when it blows hard, the vessels in the roads are frequently wrecked on the bar.

At one time we had breakers all around us, and the surge dashed with such violence against the boat, as to carry away the gunnel of one side. We were not, however, born to be drowned; some little cherub sat smiling on our prow, and conducted us in safety through the roaring waves. We just got on board in time;—the vessel had snapped one of her cables, and was slipping the other as we arrived. In five days we had the good fortune to reach Beirout, without falling in with any of the Greek pirates, who infest this coast.

Some of the American missionaries, with whom I had been acquainted in Egypt, had the kindness to conduct me to their establishment, to take up my quarters with them during my stay.

The country around Beirout is beautiful; every hill which surrounds the town is planted with mulberries: and to one coming from the desert shores of the Red Sea, the view from this harbour is quite enchanting.

There were five missionaries here when I arrived, whose hospitality all strangers have reason to acknowledge, and whose benevolent intentions, it is to be regretted, are frustrated by the pre-

judices of the natives, and the bigotry of the Turkish rulers.

In the vessel I came in there was a box of Bibles from the Society for my friend Mr. Nicolaison, and this the government seized as contraband goods, there being a firman lately issued by the Sultan, ordering all religious books coming from England to be seized at the custom-house, and destroyed. I accompanied Mr. Nicolaison to claim his Bibles, but the Governor had sent positive instructions that not a book was to be given up.

The native Christians, on the other hand, are excommunicated by their Bishops if they hold any communion with the missionaries; and the unfortunate result is, that dissensions are sown in the bosoms of families; the priests persecute the converts, the father is set against the son, and the son against the father. The converts are, indeed, few; but the parents who formerly sent their children to the English schools (as they are called) subjected themselves to the anathema of their church no less than those who actually recanted. One young man, who openly professed his conversion, was imprisoned by his Bishop for

several months; he was, at length, allowed to escape; but, in a few weeks after, he considered it would be an honour to die a martyr to truth, and he accordingly left the missionaries, who remonstrated with him on the rashness of his conduct, and threw himself in the way of the emissaries of the Bishop: he was again required to renounce his new religion, but he boldly avowed his belief in its purity, and expressed his determination to die in it. He was now put on bread and water, he was bastinadoed daily, but he resisted persecution, and he continues in a dungeon to this hour. The only Syrian converts which have been made are half a dozen needy Levantine Christians, and two Armenian Bishops; one of these seemed to have been weary of celibacy, for he married immediately after his conversion, and he and his wife have been living on the missionaries ever since; the other ran away with the funds of his convent, was our Consular agent for some time at Sidon, and was dismissed for his bad conduct.

He it is who has brought Lady H—— S—— into all her present trouble, by his intrigues; and though he is now the principal adviser of the

Emir Bechir, or Prince of the Druses, the Pacha of Acre has a firman from Constantinople for his head..

The Levantine converts are perfidious knaves, who practice on the unsuspecting piety of the missionaries, and abuse their generosity. One of these robbed Mr. M'Pherson, in Egypt, of his books: another, to my knowledge, defrauded a Frank Captain of a doubloon; another was banished from *Safet*, for immoral conduct. In short, very little good is done in Syria in the way of conversion: the schools are no longer attended by the native children, and an immense expense is incurred without any adequate advantage.

The Consul-general of Syria resides in Beirout; but being at variance with *Abdallah Pacha*, his influence in the country is very little. In every part of the Levant I visit, I have reason to regret that our government does not cause our flag to be respected, by appointing halfpay military officers to the different consulates of the Levant; the knowledge of commerce which is required for that office, is easily acquired; but the firmness, tempered with prudence, which is so necessary in a diplomatic or consular agent, in Turkish countries,

it would be in vain to look for now, either in the cities of this or of the adjoining country.

The political aspect of Mount Lebanon is altogether changed since Burckhardt's time. The famous Berber, who was then Governor of Tripoly, I found a refugee, in Damietta, a few days after his escape from Syria. I paid him a visit in quarantine; he had been wandering, he told me, for many months in disguise, in the mountains of Lebanon; a reward had been offered for his head, but though many of the Druses knew him, they did not betray him. He inquired if I was going to see Lady H—— S——, and spoke of her in high terms; she expected, he said, every day, a ship from England, laden with money, and that its arrival was very anxiously looked for by all her friends.

He told me an anecdote of himself, which Lady H—— S—— afterwards confirmed:—when he was Governor of Tripoly, his *Hasnadar*, or Chancellor of the Exchequer, informed him there was no money in the treasury! "Let the Christians be *avaniæd* or mulcted!" he replied; accordingly a sum, equivalent to five thousand pounds, was extorted from the Nazarene merchants. Shortly

after, he dreamed that the Prophet reproved him for this act; and the following morning he sent for all the merchants, and, to their utter astonishment, gave them back their money.

When he told this circumstance to Lady H—— S——, she said to him, "for a man you acted well, but for a Pacha, ill! You Turkish governors rule only to ravage your provinces; and when you do plunder, your slaves well know you have no conscience."

The *Sheik Bechir* also, whom Burckhardt describes as having all the effective power of Mount Lebanon in his hands, and as being superior even to the Emir Bechir, no longer exists; he was defeated, and slain by the Emir; his wife and family are now in the hands of his enemy.

Lady H—— S—— told me, the only part she ever took in the political affairs of Syria, was in the preservation of the Sheik Bechir's wife and children, just before the last battle, in which the Sheik was defeated: her Ladyship got intelligence from one of those secret emissaries which she has in every Pachalik of Syria, that the *harem* of the Sheik was to be surprised by the Emir's people, in two hours, at the village where they were awaiting

the event of the battle, and that the Emir had resolved on putting the children to death. Her Ladyship had just time to dispatch a trusty servant, to give notice to the wife of the unfortunate Sheik, and the *harem* was accordingly removed to a place of security, where it remained for some time, till the Emir's rage subsided, and terms were offered by him to the wife.

The *Sheik Bechir* was a Druse, and greatly beloved by his people. The *Emir*, whose jurisdiction now extends over all Mount Lebanon, is of a noble Turkish family, from Mecca, which has continued from the time of the famous Fakardine to give rulers to Lebanon. The Emir, however, whether from policy or conviction, has turned Christian, and has married one of his daughters to a converted Druse, of the Maronite Catholic Church: he affects, however, to fast the *Ramazan* in the presence of Turks; and, like the Druses, pretends to be a Mussulman when in Mahometan society.

Perhaps his chief motive for embracing Christianity is to attach to him the Christian population of Lebanon, which is more numerous than that of the Druses; the latter are again superior to

the *Ansari*, who are the descendants and followers of the celebrated "old man of the mountain;" and to the *Metaweli*, who, like the Persians, are of the sect of Ali. Of the religion of the Druses very little is known. The only facts I could confirm of former statements, or ascertain myself, were that the secular part of the community is called *Djahels*, and the ecclesiastics, *Akals*. The latter wear a white turban; they marry not the daughters of laymen; they eat not with strangers; they affect to despise riches; they all profess *Islamism*, which literally means, "abandoning one's self to God:" but they pray not as Turks; they eat pork in private; they generally have but one wife. They smoke not, swear not, and believe that there are many Druses in England; from which circumstance and some others, they have been considered by some authors as descendants of the Crusaders. The people are hospitable but vindictive: the avenging of blood is a sacred duty.

From *De Sacy's* account of their books, it appears they call themselves Unitarians, and pay divine worship to their Lord, *Hakem*, Caliph of Egypt, of Ali's race, born in the year three hun-

dred and seventy-five of the Hegira; their doctrines are a jargon of Judaism, Christianity, Mahometanism, and Paganism.

The Jesuits affirm that in the towns of Bagelin and Fredis there were gold and silver statues of their god, *Hakem*. But in all the inquiries I made concerning the adoration of a female figure, as represented by Volney, I met with no proof of any such practice; but I was frequently assured, that they paid divine honour in their churches to the image of a calf.

The women wear a horn projecting from their foreheads, called *tantoor*, twenty inches long, and tinselled over with gold and silver leaf, and sometimes with tin-foil. I saw one on the head of a young married woman, near *Deir el Kammar*, of solid silver. I endeavoured to prevail on her to sell me another which she showed me, of polished brass; but she said she would sooner part with her head, than her horn: it illustrates the scriptural expression, "thine horn hast thou exalted," and is undoubtedly a very ancient custom. I hired three mules to proceed to Sidon, a journey of a day from *Beirout*, and arrived

without any other adventure than being taken for a Moslem by a Turkish soldier on the road, and getting the *salaam Aleikoum*, or "the peace of God be on you," which is never given to an infidel. When he found out his mistake, he cursed me, and threatened to shoot me; I was no longer in Turkey, but in a country where a Turk is as much detested as a Frank; so I gave back the gentleman his malediction! and on his offering to draw his sword, I presented a pistol: his hand remained glued to the scabbard, as if it had been paralysed. I completed his astonishment by vociferating the word *Caffre* in his ears.

He immediately commenced a parley; "he was afraid he had given his *salaam* to a Rayah; he did not know I was an Englishman, he meant no offence." So we parted in peace, mutually rejoiced to lose sight of each other. Had he drawn his sword, I have no doubt but my *Cypriote* servant, a Greek by religion, would have given him a mortal blow! I saw him during the altercation with his hand on his long knife, panting for the moment to employ it; and I am sure the Turk was heartily glad to get rid of his two

troublesome infidels. Between Beirout and Sidon my servant had no less than seven falls from his mule; I was better mounted and got off with two.

Sidon is surrounded with delightful gardens, in which various fruits are to be found that are not produced in the more northern parts of Syria. The Christians lost this city in 1111; and St. Louis took it again, in 1250, from the Saracens. There is no port for large vessels; three or four brigs, of ninety and one hundred tons, were riding between the island on which the castle stands and the main land.

The British agent here (a miserable object, with famine in his looks) took us to his house: he had no salary he said; and though he was the servant of Great Britain, he had the necessity of selling his shirts to Captain Hare, the master of the vessel I came in from Damietta.

The people of Sidon laughed at me when I talked of visiting Lady H—— S——: the greatest lords, they said, had been refused admittance; and latterly, every stranger had in vain solicited an interview. I wrote a note to her Ladyship, requesting the favour of an audience, and stating my profession and pursuits.

In the evening, to the surprise of all Sidon, a pair of horses arrived for me, and a polite note from her Ladyship, stating she would be happy to see me, but without a single servant. Her Ladyship is now living about eight miles from Sidon, in the interior of the mountains, at a villa of her own construction, called D'Joun; there is no village in its vicinity; hemmed in on all sides by arid mountains, this residence is shut out from the world, and is at the mercy of the Bedouins, if they had the audacity to attack it. But of this there is little fear, they regard her as a Queen of the Desert; though I never heard her receive any other title from them than *Sittee Inglis*, or the English lady. When I was setting out from Sidon, all the merchants and Jews of the place gathered round me; one kissed my hand, another invoked blessings on my beard, and all this courtesy arose from a report that I was her Ladyship's English agent coming out with a vessel of specie for her use. I protested that I was not the bearer of a single *paras*; and when I failed to convince them, I proceeded on my route. For about two hours the scenery became wilder at every step, and at last, on the peak of a solitary mountain, separated

from every human habitation, the humble abode of Lady H—— S—— burst on my sight. I approached the house with a feeling of awe I could not overcome; the high walls that surrounded the building, the massive bars that closed the gates, the gloomy windows that overlooked the entrance, all contributed to inspire a stranger with ideas that were likely to unfit him for an immediate interview with the celebrated owner of the mansion.

After the gates were thrown open I was surprised to observe a thousand little elegancies in the distribution of the walks, and the adjustment of the flower pots in the court through which I passed. Every thing without was wild and barbarous, and all within confessed the hand of taste. I was led from the court into a little garden, at the extremity of which there was a sort of kiosk, consisting of two rooms, a sittingroom and bedroom, furnished in the European style, with chairs and tables. Every thing seemed to have been prepared for my arrival, and in a short time, an excellent dinner was served up, and various sorts of the choicest wines of Lebanon were laid on the table. It seemed to me as if

I was in some enchanted palace, the servants came and went, but never opened their lips, I spoke to them, but they answered me with bows and nods. I would have given the world to have had somebody to talk to; in the evening however, I received a note from her Ladyship, stating that business prevented her from seeing me till the *mogreb*, or sunset; and in the event of my wanting any thing, that I was to write it down on paper and commit it to the servant. The formidable moment for the interview arrived at last, I decked myself out in my finest Mameluke apparel, and followed the servant who brought her Ladyship's message.

The room into which I was ushered was in the Arab style, a long divan was raised at the end, about a foot and a half from the ground; and, at the further corner, as well as a glimmering lamp would allow me to distinguish, I perceived a tall figure in the male attire of the country, which was no other than Lady H—— herself. She received me in the most gracious manner, arose at my entrance, and said my visit afforded her great pleasure. In the course of one hour we were on the best of terms, we conversed like people who

had been acquainted for years; and, indeed, her Ladyship was so well acquainted with my character within the first two hours of my interview, whether by physiognomy or the stars, that she acquainted me with every peculiar lineament of my mind, with as much facility and as much correctness as if she had been tracing those of my countenance. I was certainly astonished at her penetration; but I have no doubt, that in judging of the characters of strangers, her Ladyship "consults the stars" less than the features of the person whose intellect she wishes to ascertain. For seven hours that I had the honour of sitting with her Ladyship, there never was a pause in the conversation. Every subject connected with oriental learning was discussed, and every observation of her Ladyship's evinced a degree of genius that astonished me, and was couched in such forcible and energetic language as to impress me with the idea that I was conversing with a woman of no ordinary intellect. The peculiarity of some of her opinions in no wise detracted from the general profundity of her reflections; and, though I could not assent to many of her abstract notions regarding astral influence and astrological

science, I had still no reason to alter my opinion of her exalted talents, though, it might appear, they were unfortunately directed to very speculative studies.

It is too much the fashion with us to impugn the understanding of every individual who differs in a single point from received opinions. There is not a physician in England who does not ridicule the notion of there being a particle of truth in the alleged effects of animal magnetism, and yet the most scientific men in France have asserted that its influence is not altogether an illusion, and, I believe, with justice. But, granting that it were an illusion; or, to go a step further, that the power which a wand is supposed to possess in the hands of certain individuals, to indicate the spot where water is to be found, is but a fanciful idea, still I do not conceive that Lady B——n, who was one of the first persons who brought that German discovery, or juggle, into notice in this country, should be deemed of an unsound mind. Neither should the understanding of Lady H—— S—— be supposed to have become a prey to ecstasy because she holds opinions that are prevalent, not only among the Arabs but, strange as

it may appear, among some of the most learned people in Syria, among some of the most enlightened European residents in Egypt, and among many travellers, two of whom are English noblemen, and whose opinions concerning magic, to my knowledge, are no less singular than those of Lady H——*.

I have conversed with most of these persons, and, I believe, they are of sane minds. Nothing

* If all those who believed in magic and demonology were to be deemed insane, some of the most celebrated men in modern and ancient times would be called lunatics. Helmont wrote a book styled, " In Verbis, Herbis, et Lapidibus est magna Virtus."

Pliny calls magic the offspring of medicine fortified with the help of astrology, and borrowing all its splendour from religion.

Paracelsus ascribes the plague to sorcery; " In Villacum," he says, " certain of the poison-makers in the time of a plague did take the dust from the graves, and did so prepare it with their magical art that they raised up a most cruel and raging plague.

Tertullian says that " Devils can contract and dilate their bodies like eels, so that they have no difficulty in entering our bodies."

St. Augustine (" De Civitate Dei") says he heard in Italy " of female innkeepers giving some drugs to travellers in cheese which turned them into mares; that they carried burdens for a certain time, and then returned to themselves:

is more difficult than to ascertain the point at which eccentricity terminates and insanity begins; at all events I am quite sure that, whatever may be the eccentricity of Lady H—— S——, her mind is unimpaired, and that few women can boast of more real genius, and none of more active benevolence. The motive that induces an English lady to live in the Desert is precisely the same as induces an English officer to take the government

but," he continues " either these things are false, or they are so *unusual* that they deserve not to be credited."

Luther, according to his own account, communed with devils. When he was imprisoned in Wurtzburg Castle, he says, " Now, among other things which they brought me were hazel nuts, which I put into a box, and sometimes I used to crack and eat of them. In the night time my gentleman, the devil, came and got the nuts out of the box, and cracked them against one of the bedposts, making a rumbling noise about my bed, but I regarded him nothing at all; when afterwards I began to slumber, then he kept such a racket on the chamber stairs, as if many empty barrels had been thrown down; and though I knew there was no passage, either up or down, yet I went to see what the matter was; but finding the door shut, I said—Art thou there? so be there still."—*Vide Hibbert's Spectral Illusions.*

Coleridge, in commenting on Luther's visions, says, " During his eight months' stay at Wurtzburg, in consequence of a more luxurious diet than he was accustomed to, he was plagued with temptations both from the flesh and the spirit."

of *Sierra Leone*—the ambition of governing; the Wilderness, of the two, is perhaps the most preferable post. Do the people who deem Lady H—— S—— mad imagine there is no pleasure in reigning in the affections of the kind-hearted Bedouins? do they think there is no delight in exercising the power which one strong mind possesses over a thousand weak ones? do they believe it irksome to be the arbitrator between them and their passions, to bid the violent man be temperate, and to hear him promise to be obedient; to command the unjust man to make reparation, and to see him restore what he had stolen; or lastly, to counsel the jealous Arab to pause before he murdered, perhaps, an innocent woman, and to see him submit to the delay of vengeance till his rage abates, and his heart revolts at his own purpose?

To one who knows the Arabs well, the natural simplicity of their character, their generosity, and their kindness of heart, there is no small pleasure in remaining amongst them, and especially in the condition of a benefactor and a chief, who is looked up to by them, not only as a ruler, but as a being of a superior order; and, in this light, both the Arabs of Mount Lebanon and the Be-

douins of the Desert look upon Lady H—— S——. But her influence over the Turkish Pachas of Syria has, indeed, diminished greatly.

She has now been seventeen or eighteen years in the country; and, for many years after her arrival, to gain their protection, which was very desirable in such an unsettled region, it was necessary to make considerable presents annually, which no private fortune could be equal to for any length of time. So long as the presents were made, the Pachas were all courtesy, and the name of the *Sittee Inglis* was a passport over Syria; but, latterly, that her hand has ceased to lavish the shawls of Cashemire, the silver mounted pistols of England, the swords of Damascus, the muslins of India on these rapacious governors, their friendship has waxed cold; and, in some instances, has been converted into enmity: such is the case with Abdallah, Pacha of Acre, and the Emir Bechir of the Druses. The latter has taken every occasion of thwarting her, and has latterly issued a firman, which he procured from Acre, forbidding any Mahometan subject, on pain of death, to remain in her service, or to carry water to her house, with which it is supplied from a river three or four

miles distant. The consequence of this edict is, that she has been left without servants, and her beautiful garden has gone to ruin for want of irrigation.

Her establishment formerly consisted of thirty or forty domestics, and a great number of girls, whose education was her employment: but they have all deserted her, with the exception of five servants, and on their fidelity her life is now dependent. Several attempts have been lately made to break in at night: people have been found murdered, who were attached to her, and the corpse of a stranger, a few days ago, was found lying near the gate.

Her great enemy is a certain *Yacoub* Aga, the converted Bishop whom I have already mentioned, a man of infamous character, and who has contrived, with the wages of his infamy, to purchase a village, which is about an hour's journey from *D'Joun*. Some time ago this man seized on her Ladyship's camels, on pretence of employing them for some work of the Emir's. The servants resisted, and one of them was bastinadoed: the servants of Lady H—— retaliated, some time after, on some people of the Emir's, and basti-

nadoed them: this produced a great deal of ill will between the Emir and her Ladyship; and Yacoub Aga took every opportunity of insulting the people of the latter, wherever he met them.

Not many days before my arrival, one of the servants from D'Joun, on passing the house of Yacoub Aga, was assailed by the women of the latter; they abused his mistress, and he retorted their invectives on them and their master. The poor fellow got cudgelled; and in return Yacoub's men were subsequently cudgelled by the servants of Lady H——. Yacoub complained to the Emir, the Emir complained to the Pacha; and, finally, the firman was issued, which left her Ladyship without servants, and has converted her gardens into a desert.

The present rumours of war make her situation still more perilous, but her intrepidity is unshaken, and all my endeavours to prevail on her to remove, at least, into Egypt, have been fruitless. The only European at *D'Joun* is Miss W——, whom I have not seen, for the laws of the harem are observed there as strictly as in the Turkish capital.

I had an opportunity of seeing that the Be-

douins remain as attached as ever to their benefactress (for such Lady H—— is); they come to her in all their difficulties for counsel, and show her more respect than I ever saw paid to the Viceroy of Egypt.

The account of her troubles with the Emir and the Pacha, I have had from her Ladyship's own lips; very different causes have been assigned for them, but those I have stated are the true ones.

Having smoked and conversed till half-past three in the morning, I retired, delighted with a conversation in which the natural eloquence of this lady was only surpassed by the originality of her observations. Her habits are peculiar; she retires to rest at the dawn and rises in the afternoon; she takes her meals in her own apartments and never with her guests; she drinks no wine, and very seldom eats meat. Other nights it was still later when I retired; tea was sometimes brought in towards two in the morning.

The male attire of Syria is extremely rich and flowing; it becomes females no less than men, and sets off the portly figure of Lady H—— to great advantage. As the situation of her Lady-

ship is more that of a Bedouin sovereign than of one in a private station, I do not conceive the laws of hospitality are infringed by giving you these particulars. Lady H—— complains only of those who have given false and malicious accounts of her. I trust I have given neither. In conversation she expressed her opinion very freely of Mr. C——g, who appeared to be no great favourite of hers, and of many other public characters; and though she professed to read no books, for "books" she asserts "file away the mind," she yet appeared conversant with every thing that was going on in the political and literary world. I give you her opinions of C——g and some others, word for word, as I heard them from her.

"I hate your fiery-headed Irish politicians; for soldiers, there are none like them; for a *coup de main* I would have Irish—all Irish. The Scotch should plan the project, the Irish execute it; the latter know not how to retreat: they have a great deal of wit, which consists in quickness of apprehension; they always have genius, but they never have any judgment. George C——g was one of your fiery-headed Irish politicians. When I acted as Mr. Pitt's secretary, I had nothing but trouble

with this Irishman. One day I could hardly prevail on him to sit down to dinner at Mr. Pitt's, because Lord Castlereagh was present!—He was like a fine lady at a play, who becomes quite fidgety because a naughty person is sitting in the next box: he was afraid of infection. Oh! there is no one knows George C——g so well as I do; he was never staunch to any person, nor to any party; he never would serve Mr. Pitt well, nor yet would he break with him.

"When Mr. Pitt went out of office, C——g used his name to make it believed that Mr. P— was only waiting for a bait to be drawn in again. Mr. P— was obliged to forbid him the house: but he soon ingratiated himself again into favour. C—— has no largeness of soul: he is voluble and erudite, but he never was such an orator as Grattan: Grattan's speeches will read well to every one; but C——g's are only intelligible to your Greek and Latin gentlemen: to the country squires they are nonsense; for the agricultural interests are foreign to the classical consideration of C——g: the corn laws are not more congenial to his contemplation than the study of alchymy is to the Archbishop of Canterbury. To such

beings as myself, who have their own strong notions of things and persons, the speeches of C——g are vapid; there is no depth in the argument; no universality in the philosophy.

"Lord C——h was the best meaning man in the world, but his intellect was not of the first order; in the documents he was in the habit of writing for Mr. P—, there were always blunders, but he used to write them over again, very good-humouredly, when Mr. P— pointed out the errors. C—— and he were always in one another's way, the senate was not large enough for them both.

"When Mr. Pitt was out of office, I acted as his secretary, and he had then as much business as when he was in. He very seldom opposed my opinions, and always respected my antipathies. In private life he was cheerful and affable; he would rise in the midst of his gravest avocations to hand me a fallen handkerchief; he was always polite to women, and a great favourite with many of them; but he was wedded to the state, and nothing but death could divorce him from his country. He was fond of me; he loved originality in any shape. His great recreation, after

the fatigue of business, was stealing into the country, entering a clean cottage, where there was a tidy woman and a nicely-scoured table, and there he would eat bread and cheese like any ploughman. He detested routs, and always sat down to plain dinners. He never eat before he went to the House; but when any thing important was to be discussed, he was in the habit of taking a glass of port wine with a tea-spoonful of bark.

"Had Sir Francis B——t taken any line of politics but that of reform, he would have acquired fame; his early talents fitted him for the conduct of any important question; he was a sound speaker, and he was ever a gentleman; but in reform it is all prosing,—subduing a noble spirit to the nature of a rabble, and subjecting one's lungs to the breath of the garlic-eaters of liberty. Sir Francis was elegant in his manners, comely in his person, and his principles were excellent.

"The old K—g was an honest upright man; his very obstinacy was a virtue; it had been impressed on him early, that he had a certain line of duty before him, and that to swerve from it was

to wound the constitution. The constitution was his idol; and, in his sight, even its imperfections had something sacred in them.

"The Duke of Y—k was an excellent prince. I was on terms of intimacy with him for many years: he opposed the Catholics from principle, because he respected his father's prejudices, and really thought the influence of the Pope was very great. In his office he was the most punctual man in the world; he had no partialities; and, strangest of all, he never showed the least jealousy of W——— n, on whom so many places were conferred, which his Royal Highness might have been as well qualified to fill.

"The Syrian Christians are the vilest of mankind; treacherous, filthy, lazy, cowardly dogs; they are not originally of the country, but outcasts from Greece, Sicily, and Italy. I called them all "kelp" (dogs), and turned them out of doors. Since then I have never had a Christian servant. The Arabs are far better; yet they, likewise, are ungrateful. They are a moral people in general; that is, their passions are not so strong as Europeans imagine. The unmarried people are particularly circumspect; yet jealousy finds

its way into their tents, and an instance of it came before me very lately. An Arab suspected his wife of talking too much with strangers in his absence, and one of his neighbours confirmed his suspicions. He went home, proceeded to strangle the unfortunate woman, and, when she became insensible, he dragged her to some distance, and commenced interring her: the first heap of sand, however, which he threw upon her, recalled sensation; she manifested symptoms of life, and he repented of his vengeance: he brought her to me half dead; told the whole story of her supposed guilt; but owned he was premature in strangling her, as he should have first got me to consult her star, to ascertain really whether she deserved to die or not.

"I sent the woman into the *harem*, had her bled and taken care of till she recovered, and then I summoned the man before me. 'My good friend,' said I, 'your wife's star has been consulted; take her back in peace, and thank God you have her; for it is written in the stars—'On vain surmises thou shalt not strangle thy wife, neither shalt thou hearken to the slanderers of her

honour; but when thy eyes behold her shame, then, and then only, believe their evidence!'

"The man immediately held out his hand to his gentle rib; she kissed it, and out he walked, desiring her to follow him with the most perfect indifference. I asked the woman if she were afraid of another act of violence? She calmly replied, 'Is he not my husband! has he not a right to kill me, if he suspects me of doing wrong?'

"We have been talking last night of medicine, and you have spoken of it like a European; but depend on it medicine has gained no ground. Chemistry has not advanced it. I have seen physicians in England cramming their patients with conflicting drugs, imagining that minerals acted in the human stomach as they did in the crucible. The Arabs are better doctors: they give a grave opinion of a disease; they observe its progress and they weigh its symptoms before they apply a remedy.

"It is not every man that can be a doctor, either by study or education. A man must have a particular vocation; he must have what the

Arabs call a green hand; and such a one will only be successful in the healing art*. A man is born a physician as he is a poet, and every individual has his peculiar destination. I myself rear plants which would thrive under no other hand; if I only put a withered twig into the ground, it is sure to shoot up; and that decaying flower you see yonder dies, because it was touched by a boy whom I had reasons to forbid breathing on it.

"It is in the stars that medicine, like other sciences, is to be sought and studied; a new species of colleges must be established before the world becomes really enlightened: learning had its cradle in these countries, and its grave in the west; it is here its spirit is destined to revive, and again to illume the earth.

"Astrological *savans* must be appointed to every district, to consult the heavenly bodies at the birth of every child.

"The nature of each natal star is to be registered, and kept secret, till the period of education,

* "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another, the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another, faith by the same Spirit; to another, the gift of healing by the same Spirit."—1 *Cor.* xii. 8.

which is to be adapted to that particular calling which the star of every human being indicates.

"How is it, unacquainted as I am with you, that I am able to tell you every minutia of your character? how is it I was able to tell Lord St. A—— of his having certain marks on his arm which I had never heard of?—why, by the stars. How is it that people often feel an innate and invincible dislike to persons they never saw before? and how is it the first time you look into certain eyes which have neither brilliancy nor beauty, that your soul is frequently insensibly attracted to that person?—why, it is by the magnetism of the mind*. There are certain stars which have an affinity, and the souls of those beings over whom such stars preside are bound

* To discover the source from which this doctrine and some others of her Ladyship are probably derived, the magicians of the middle ages are to be consulted. As to "the magic of the mind," I find the following notion of it in Helmont: "Every man, in respect that he has been a partaker of the image of God, hath power to create certain entities by the power of imagination, and these ideas do clothe themselves with a body in the shape of the image fabricated in the imagination, and it is by these that such strange things are effected as are falsely attributed to demons."—*Vide De Inject. Mater.*

in friendship: vice versa, there are some *antipathica* people that my spirit sickens to encounter, and their stars and mine were never in conjunction. The pole of a star is in this order: at the top are the angels*; a little lower, the spirits of the air; still lower, the intelligences of the earth, of the vegetable, then of the mineral kingdom; and beneath the centre, the seven regions of hell, and the seven great kings. Of gems there are many, which have a benign, and some a malign influence.

"The prince of the Wahabees always wore a large jasper† under his ham, and D'Jezzar never

* The angels and spirits mentioned here are generally imagined in the East to be beings of a superior intelligence to man, but of a corporeal form. Webster informs us, for the four first centuries the Christians held this opinion. In the last century Dr. Moore contended for the truth of it in these words: "I look upon angels to be as truly compound beings, consisting of body and soul, as men and brutes." Damascen says, "That angels, *quantum ad nos*, are incorporeal and immaterial; but, compared to God, are corporeal and material." Tertullian and St. Augustin are of the same opinion.

† Boyle mentions several cures made by the touch of a jasper in the possession of Boetius de Boot. And Boyle, on his authority, recommends a stone called *lapis nephriticus* for curing the stone.—*Credat Judæus.*

went without an amethyst about his person. The latter was in possession of a stone by which, it is considered, his treasures were acquired: I have seen it in the possession of a poor man not far from *D'Joun*, he had the power to discover hidden riches by it; but that man who applies magic to the enriching of himself must have a sudden death. That is the reason magicians are always poor. I will now show you two of the greatest wonders you have ever beheld,—a horse, of the race of Solomon's favourite steed, saddled by the hand of God*, and a twelvefold ear of wheat, both prophesied to fall into the hands of a woman, a stranger in the east.

" These things, I perceive, are above your conception; let us talk of other matters: Are you aware that madness is cured by persons of celestial

* This horse with the celestial saddle I accompanied her Ladyship to the stable-yard to see. I never beheld a finer animal; the groom could with difficulty hold him; but the moment Lady H—— approached he became perfectly gentle, and stooped his head to have it stroked by her hand. There was an indentation in the back, which resembled in shape and depth a Turkish saddle. If a line were drawn along the level of the back, the hollow would have measured about a foot and a half. The formation was decidedly unnatural.

science, and that all mad people are possessed by devils; yet so it is, and an Arab friend of mine has the power to drive them out*. The Arabs make use of several poisons unknown in Europe, the deadliest is that which is extracted from the intestines of a *murdered* man. There is a vegetable poison which can be communicated by a garment.

" Craniology and physiognomy are but secondary sciences. The stars acquaint me with the physiognomy of a person I never saw. If I wanted to judge of the intrepidity of a man by

* There is not a village in Syria where some Sheik has not the reputation of being able to cast out devils: and in Egypt I have been frequently applied to to dispossess devils, where the patient laboured under epileptic fits. I saw the ceremony of driving out a devil performed, in a village at the foot of Gebel-Silsil. The patient lay writhing on the ground, while the Sheik exorcised the devil, with whom he conversed, but the answers of his satanic majesty were inaudible to us. After half an hour's work the devil was driven out, without any smell of sulphur, and the man got immediately well. I have a book in my possession, called " Exorcismos Terribiles," or " Flagellum Demonum," showing the shortest way of ejecting devils, written by the Chaplain to a King of Naples; and another work, written about the same time, 1680, by Glanvil, Chaplain to the King of England, " Proving, by Holy Scripture, the real existence of spirits and witches."

external signs, I would measure the space between the region of the heart and the middle of the chest, and if I found it small and not expanded, it would denote a pusillanimous spirit.

"There are many strange things to be learned in this country; it is not from a licentious press that knowledge is to be derived, which crams the public stomach with crude matter; but from the celestial bodies which contain the elements of all learning. I have not read a book since childhood, for books file away the mind.

"The English people are infatuated about their erudition, their constitution, and their climate; the essence of the first is vanity—corruption, of the second—and that of the third, fog. The English nation is too fat, its mind wants mortification; every one talks of morals, and the lips become so familiar with the name, that the heart forgets the virtue. Religious imposition has overrun this country as well as many others; God was obliged to withdraw the truth, when the world became so degraded as to be no longer fit for its purity.

"Some of the learned people here consider *Judas* in a better light than we Christians regard him,

they pretend he was misrepresented, and look up to him as a prophet who is destined to appear again on earth.

"As to leaving this country, your advice is vain, I never will return to England. I am encompassed by perils; I am no stranger to them; I have suffered shipwreck off the coast of Cyprus; I have had the plague here; I have fallen from my horse near Acre, and been trampled on by him; I have encountered the robbers of the Desert, and when my servants quaked I have galloped in amongst them and forced them to be courteous; I have faced them;—and when a horde of plunderers was breaking in at my gate I sallied out amongst them, sword in hand, and after convincing them, had they even been inclined, that they could not hurt me, I fed them at my gate and they behaved like thankful beggars. Here am I destined to remain; that which is written in the great book who may alter? It is true I am surrounded by perils; it is true I am at war with the prince of the mountains and the Pacha of Acre; it is very true my enemies are capable of assassination; but if I do perish, my fall shall be a bloody one. I

have plenty of arms, good Damascus blades, I use no guns, and while I have an arm to wield a *hanjar*, these barren rocks shall have a banquet of slaughter before "my face looks black" in the presence of my enemies, and two hundred years hence, the Bedouins of the Desert shall talk of the *Sittee Inglis*, how she sat her Arab steed, and fell like an Arab chief, when the star of her glory had set for ever!"

It is impossible to give an idea of her animation when she spoke on these subjects, and though I have given her language word for word, as I endeavoured to impress it on my memory at the time, still to understand its energy, one must have heard her, and one must have been accustomed to have heard people speaking of the influence of the stars (for it is the common topic of oriental conversation) to listen with gravity and even with interest to such observations as fell from her Ladyship. The only two persons whom she inquired after, and in whose health and happiness she appeared to be interested, were [illegible]y G. E——n and Mr. B——m. After re[illegible]ing some days with her Ladyship, I took my

leave, highly gratified with the society of a person whose originality, or eccentricity (if it deserves that name), is a far less prominent feature in her character, than her extensive information, her intrepidity of spirit, her courteous manners, and her unbounded benevolence.

I am, my dear Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXVI.

TO DR. HAMILTON.

MY DEAR SIR, Tyre, Sept. 20, 1827.

THE belief in magic is so general in Syria and in Egypt, that a traveller who has been long in these countries, becomes familiarised with the name, and at length begins to listen with curiosity to that which at first only excited his contempt. Such I confess was the case with me, I never doubted but that those who believed in it laboured under a delusion, but it surprised me not a little to find people of good education and even of sound intellect impressed with an idea that the occult sciences of the Egyptians and Chaldeans, were still cultivated by the descendants of both these people. I resolved to banish, as far as lay in my power, every preconceived opinion on the subject, and to converse with

every magician of repute both Syrian and Egyptian.

I commenced with a gentleman well known in Egypt as an antiquarian, whose researches in the Pyramids made some noise in the Quarterly Reveiw some few years ago. Captain C—— first broached his abstruse opinions in a periodical paper, published at Cairo very lately. He stated that his secret studies enabled him to throw a new light on the Scriptures, and that he had found not only the two lost letters of the Hebrew alphabet, but that he had also collected the scattered members of Osiris, which was a figurative way of expressing his discovery of many hidden mysteries of morality. He stated the result of his researches to be this, that the Scriptures were originally written in three different senses, and that the metaphorical one was that which had been erroneously rendered as the plain and obvious one. The intelligence of this new doctrine of Captain C—— got to Rome, and both he and his coadjutor, a Frank, were excommunicated by the Pope, and the anathema was extended to all persons who read his publications; the consequence was, no more was heard

about "the scattered members of Osiris," and Captain C—— and his "two lost letters" furnished amusement for some months to the Europeans of Cairo and Alexandria. As we both inhabited Mr. S—'s house in Alexandria for some months, I had a favourable opportunity of learning his opinions respecting magic. I found his professed belief was in what he called Chaldean science, which consisted in the knowledge of certain cabalistical characters, which contained the rudiments of astrology. In these he gave me to understand he was a proficient; and likewise in animal magnetism. He spoke in mystery always, but he acknowledged he was versed in magic; and whenever I hinted how desirable it would be to enrich himself, he always gave me an abstruse reply, which was above my humble comprehension. The Captain was, I verily believe, of a sane mind, and was esteemed by Mr. Salt, as a well informed and honest meaning person. I frequently sat up with him long after midnight, endeavouring to get information on this subject, but I was always foiled; sometimes he would tell me not to be impatient, that there were various degrees of initiation to go

through before I could know all; that there was much fasting and solitary confinement to undergo: at other times he asked me if I was not afraid of going mad, should any thing supernatural appear, uninitiated as I was; but it was in vain I told him I feared nothing but not seeing enough, and I entreated of him night after night, if there were any thing in his art a man might look on, that he would leave the care of my intellect to myself, and exhibit something wonderful. He always baffled me with an incomprehensible jargon, which I found he borrowed from the golden verses of Pythagoras, over which volume he pored day and night: but what staggered me more than any thing in the Captain's magic, was his narration of a circumstance which happened at Mr. S—'s a short time before my arrival, and of which Mr. S— gave me the particulars long before. In the narration of this circumstance, I found the Captain misrepresented a material point to favour the doctrine of supernatural agency.

Mr. S— had lost a quantity of plate, and had never been able to find out the thief. In such cases in Egypt, it is customary to send for an

Arab magician, either to frighten the servants into a confession; or (with some) to ascertain the truth from the fortuneteller; from the former motive Mr. S— sent for a celebrated wise man, and took every precaution that he should have no communication with the servants. On his arrival, he desired to have a boy, under ten years of age, brought to him. Mr. S— had one sent for from a neighbouring house, who was ignorant of the robbery. The magician recited divers incantations; he drew a circle on the floor, placed the boy in the middle, and poured some ink into the hollow of his hand*; he desired the boy to look: he did so, and said he saw nothing; he desired him to look again: the boy started back—he looked terrified; he said he saw a man with a bundle in his hand: he bid him look again; he saw a man sacrificing an ox before a frightful looking person on a throne, and another man was depositing his bundle before this terrific Sultan.

* I find this mode of enchantment very ancient, the Egyptians were in the habit of showing apparitions in crystals. Paracelsus calls it *Ars Berryllistica*. It is practised in the dark by the inspection of a boy, or of a maid. Paracelsus says, it is "lawful Nigromancy;" and only performed by sidereal influence and strong faith.

The boy could with difficulty all this while be prevailed on to look into the ink. The magician bid him describe the dress and aspect of the man who had the bundle: he did so, and they tallied in every particular with those of an Arab servant who had been suspected of the theft, and who had just quitted Mr. S—'s service. The magician refused to name him; he said, his dress and features had been accurately described.

This feat appeared so singular to Mr. S—, that he committed the facts to paper, and had them confirmed by Mr. R—, an English traveller, who was present. Now when Captain C—— was telling me this circumstance, which he thought I was quite ignorant of, and of which he was an eyewitness, he embellished it a little by stating that the magician named a tree where the plate was concealed, and that, on searching there, it had been all found. I thought, if magic required more than truth for its support, its foundation was bad. I therefore sought other philosophers for occult information.

The next was a Hebrew Prophet, who foretold many events which really happened: such as the arrival of European ships from Italy, in a certain

week, nay, on a certain day. Captain C—— told me, he conversed with him, and that he had a better knowledge of the cabalistic writings than any one he had met with. He was a Polish Jew, who was travelling for his pleasure, and was said to be very rich: he created a great sensation in Alexandria; the most respectable people actually believed him to possess supernatural knowledge. But he suddenly fell into disgrace as a magician: a vessel, which he some weeks before predicted would be wrecked on her passage outwards, arrived in safety in Egypt; and the pseudo-prophet, finding that his presence excited laughter every where he went, was forced at last (to use a vulgar expression) to cut and run*.

In Syria, I heard of his fame in every town;

* My friend, Dr. Watson, was acquainted with this philosopher in Syria. He told me of a trick which he endeavoured to pass off in his presence as a feat of magic; he had a square wooden box, in which were inclosed a number of little pieces of wood, with several numbers painted on them: when these were arranged in order they covered the surface of the bottom of the box. He desired the doctor to arrange them as he thought fit, while he retired to another part of the room, and then to cover the box; when this was done, the magician applied a magnifying glass, like that of a watchmaker, to the cover of the box, which was half an

the "*Nebi el Yudi*," or Hebrew Prophet, was in every man's mouth; the Pacha of Acre entertained him at court like a sovereign, for the sake of his conjurations.

At Tripoli, the Governor treated him with the same honour; he prophesied two political events, which happened in due time, to the Governor's great annoyance; but in a third instance, he had the indiscretion to prophesy the downfal of the Pacha; and the result was, that instead of being honoured as heretofore, he was looked upon as a diabolical sorcerer, and was cast into prison. After five or six weeks' imprisonment he was

inch thick; he then told him that in such a corner was such a number, in the centre was such another, and so on: the box was opened, and the numbers were found exactly in the situation described. The doctor was exceedingly puzzled; he could not imagine how the trick had been performed; it occurred to him, that it might have been through the intervention of magnetism. He insisted on seeing the glass; and though he was allowed to examine it only in the hand of the conjurer (for such he was), he observed a small needle; he next examined the numbers; he found some heavier than others, and he had no doubt that they contained iron within them, with each a different quantity of the metal, and that the needle was magnetic.

released, and his liberty (he told me with tears in his eyes) cost him no less than twelve thousand piastres. I met him in rather an extraordinary way at Beirout; he had been prophesying over the town for many days, and had acquired great fame. I found him at dinner one day at the Missionaries'; he did not know me, but I remembered him at once. He talked of the wonders he had performed in various places; of the persecutions he endured, and was still destined to endure. I begged of him to explain to me the elements of his philosophy, about which he talked a great deal. After dinner, in Mr. Bird's library, I pressed him for a reply; he wandered away from the subject every instant; but I returned to it again and again, and at last I got this philosophical intelligence from him:

"There are four great essences, as there are four elements; there are four celestial sciences, as there are four quarters of the globe: these sciences are magic, medicine, poetry, and mathematics. There are four great spirits, as there are four cardinal points; and there are four virtues, courage, chastity, perseverance, and patience; as

there are four primitive tongues, derived from that of Paradise: viz. Hebrew, Arabic, Coptic, and Hindostanee."

"But, my good friend," said I, "in speaking of your four virtues you have said nothing of truth: is it possible for one who professes your philosophy, to make light of veracity?" "God forbid!" said the prophet. I whispered in his ear two words—"Alexandria—the ship!" the sound was a thunderbolt to the Prophet; his cheek became pale as ashes, his lip quivered, but I set his soul at ease, with the assurance that the unlucky affair I glanced at should go no further.

My next conference with a magician was at Sidon; he was an Arab Sheik, of Mount Lebanon, and was consulted by all Syria. I sent a man and horse nine miles, to fetch him to Sidon, for I was told that a lady of distinction in the country would not be well pleased if a European visited him. I sent two dollars, and a written promise of three more, to compensate a magician who was in possession of the philosopher's stone, as I was assured, for a journey back and forward of eighteen miles. The old gentleman arrived in the

afternoon; he bestowed several blessings on my beard, and inquired if I wished to know things past or things to come. I said I did not want to know either, but desired to see something super natural: "You shall be gratified," said he, "but every body, except you, must leave the room, and the light must be shut out."

He darkened the room; he muttered something to himself, in a dismal tone, in which I could only distinguish the word "Allah." "Are you now prepared," said he, "to undergo the terror of futurity?" "I am," I replied, "quite ready:" there was a dead silence, then a low groan; it seemed to come from a dying person: "Put your hands to your eyes," said the magician; I put them to my pistols, for I began to fear some treachery. I perceived some shining characters traced on the wall, they were Arabic letters, but their import I did not understand.

"Tell me," said I, "what these words mean, and who has traced them:" "The words are, 'Beware of the sea!'" he replied, "and they are written by no human hand." I did not altogether like the warning, but I consoled myself with the belief that

the smell of phosphorus was in my nostrils, and that the writing was too bad for superhuman penmanship.

I resolved to ascertain the fact, but the Sheik was too quick for me; before I had time to lay my fingers on the scrawl, he seized my wrist, and with the other he tore something from the wall, which rustled like parchment, and thrust it into his bosom: from that moment the characters disappeared; the old magician became so indignant at my impetuosity, that he absolutely refused to answer me a single question. I paid him what I had promised, with the hope of softening him, but it was all in vain; he quitted the house, muttering abuse on all its inmates.

My next essay was on Lady H—— S——. I never ceased importuning her for knowledge on the subject of the stars. But though I was flattered with the promise of the first place in her astrological college, which one day or other she purposes founding, I certainly did not get much insight into the science of astrology.

The following is a dialogue which took place at midnight, in a gloomy apartment, lit by a small

lamp, placed in a recess by the window, which was so contrived as to render me visible, while her figure was hardly to be distinguished.

Lady H. Are you really ambitious of knowing the science of the stars?

R. M. If you have the power of putting such knowledge into any ostensible shape, I pray you to do so; I desire nothing more.

Lady H. What! would you encounter the gaze of a spirit?

R. M. If it should be a spirit of health, I would go this night to Jericho to behold it; if it should be an evil spirit, I believe it cannot hurt me, and I am ready to look upon it.

Lady H. There is nothing more easy; but I fear the effect of terror on your wits. Know you not that people of weak minds have pined away in idiotcy after intercourse with unearthly spirits, and that even strong intellects have been impaired after undergoing the trial?

R. M. I have heard of such things; but I am prepared for any spectacle you are pleased to exhibit.

Lady H. Pause for a moment; you know not

what you risk; it must not be at present; thirty days fasting and silence* are first necessary. The Italian Doctor who was here underwent this first trial in a cave, and, at the expiration of the term, he was visited by a spirit in dark attire, which terrified him so much that he had not courage to venture on the second step of initiation. But if you wished to see that pipe endowed with motion, it could be done. The man who has that power lives at no great distance, and I have seen him make that very pipe move from that corner, and glide out of the room, and go back to its former place."

All further importunity proved unsuccessful. I left *D'Joun* without seeing any thing supernatural, but the intrepidity of the mistress of the mansion.

My next inquiry after *celestial* knowledge was of a Coptic priest, whose magical *renommée* was greater than that of any other sorcerer either in

* The thirty days fasting and seclusion from society was indispensable with all the magicians I conversed with in Syria. The progressive steps of initiation was another point which they all agreed on.

Syria or Egypt. He resided in his convent at Jerusalem, and there I visited him. At first I could not get him to acknowledge he knew any thing of magic. He was on a sick bed; his aspect was that of the Caliban family; in short, he was the most ill looking man I ever laid my eyes on. I perceived the presence of my servant was disagreeable to him; so I sent him off, and commenced my inquiries anew. I told him I had some dollars to bestow on the first magician who should convince me, by ocular demonstration, that there was any truth in his science.

This hint had the desired effect. "Would it satisfy you," said he, "to see this room converted into a lake; to stand on this divan, and behold the walls that separate the door come in close contact; that window to become a solid mass of stone, and to be deprived of all egress for a certain time, perhaps for ever?"

"That would satisfy me fully," I replied; "only perform that one feat, and these four sequins are at your disposal."

"But the scene would terrify you too much, good *hakkim*," was his answer (like that of all

the others of his art when it came to the point). "You would blame me, I fear; and if it came to the ears of the Bishop, he would dismiss me from the convent, as he did once before, for terrifying the wife of a Levantine."

"But, my good father," said I, "you are not dealing now with the wife of a Levantine, but with a hakkim and an Englishman."

It was all in vain: I saw he had no intention, and, most probably, not the power of performing what he spoke of. Whenever I recurred to the lake and the closing of the walls, he shifted the topic; he said he could do more wonderful things with cups and cards; but these I rejected, and insisted on the lake or nothing. I told him I must leave him, without bestowing the alms I intended on his convent; but still, if he would confess to me what he really knew, either of the truth or falsehood of magic, no one in Jerusalem should be the wiser for the information, and he should have a sequin for the poor, who are always relieved in Palestine in the persons of the monks.

"Well, then," said he, "you must know there

is a convent of ours in the Desert, not far from the Red Sea, called the Convent of San Antonio, and there all the knowledge that exists in the world of magic is shut up. There is a large library of ancient manuscripts, Coptic and Chaldean books, and as no stranger is admitted within the walls of the convent, the secrets of the dark science are buried there. I was in the convent for six months, five-and-twenty years ago, and the little I know of magic I learned there; but I had not access to the books, like the other priests, and cannot boast of the fiftieth part of their supernatural power. More I am not at liberty to tell you." I paid my sequin for learning——nothing; and the result of all my inquiries in the East amounted to this,—that in what is commonly called magic, there is indeed——nothing.

But how far animal magnetism is worthy of belief is another question: like phrenology, the attempt to reduce it to a system, while the investigation of its laws was yet in its infancy, has encumbered it with difficulties, and I believe with lies. As it is, its absurdities are only heard of in

England; its extraordinary effects are best known in France and Germany.

What is vulgarly called sympathy and antipathy, I believe is nothing less than animal magnetism. In Glanvil's *Saducismus Triumphatus* it is said, "Nature acts on the human body by subtile vapours and aporrhœas of minute particles, which pass from one body to the other." With some modification, this old opinion is the foundation of the belief in animal magnetism.

Dr. Philip instituted several physiological experiments, to prove that "electricity is the agent that is employed by the nervous organs, and universally diffused for purposes intimately connected with the animal economy throughout every part of the human system."

How far the electric fluid may serve for the medium of communication between the mind of one man and that of another, is a question which deserves consideration; for as the air is the medium of sounds from place to place, the electric fluid may likewise be the vehicle of sympathetic thought.

The somnambulism requisite for the operation of

animal magnetism, is only another name for the waking ecstasies which Helmont and others had the art of falling into, when they desired to have what Webster calls spiritual visions; and whose effect on his authority "caused them to understand many mystical matters, without any real egression of the soul out of the body, but a freeing or withdrawing of it from the senses, and thus joining it to the intelligible world, and beholding things as present." To the old accounts of animal magnetism there is little attention to be paid, but I defy any scientific person to observe its phenomena in the spirit of philosophy, and not of supercilious contempt for what he cannot easily understand, and to say its effects are entirely delusive.

Before I conclude, I have only to remark that the magical fictions of the Orientals differ entirely from ours. English witchcraft is more puerile than the Eastern. Our word witch is derived from wit, and originally signified no more than a wise woman. The name was given to one who entered into a regular compact with the devil, some part of whose body had been sucked by a

demon, who had the power of assuming the form of a wolf, cat, dog, or hare.

The witch-finders, who were employed by Government to bring the professors of witchcraft to justice (who were generally old decrepit women), ascertained their guilt, by sticking needles into their warts, or any callous excrescences on their feet and hands: if they appeared not to feel much pain, they were taken up and burned.

In the East, on the contrary, every people but the Hebrews treated their magicians with honour; they affected to have no league with demons, they pretended to derive all their knowledge from the stars. Their business was to avert the ills of humanity, by pointing out remedies which had a benign influence from the planets for disease. The business of our witches, on the contrary, was to sour milk, to pinch poor girls, to distort the limbs of children, and to turn the *ménage* of a cottage topsyturvy. In the East, astronomy and astrology, magic and medicine, were synonymous words for general science.

In short, in the words of Roger Bacon, their art was " to know in fit constellations to do their

works according to the configurations of the heavens, that they might not only dispose characters, but also the operations both of nature and art, agreeably to the celestial virtues."

By the prohibition of magic in the 18th chapter of Deuteronomy, it would appear there were various descriptions of sorcerers among the Jews: "There shall not be found among you any one that useth divination, or an observer of the times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with a familiar spirit, or a wizard, or a necromancer."

The first Hebrew word, *Kesamim*, a diviner, is applicable to the witch of Endor, from Saul's manner of addressing her: "Divine to me, I pray thee, by thy familiar spirit."

The second Hebrew word, *Megnonen*, an observer of times, is applicable to the augury of a season's fitness, from the flight of birds, entrails of victims, &c.

The third term, *Menachesh*, or enchanter, is to be applied to psyllæ, or serpent-charmers; for *Nachash* signifies a serpent.

The fourth term, *Mecasseph*, or a witch, some

of the learned rabbins consider one who deceived the sight with magical spectres.

The fifth word, *Chebher*, or charmer, signifies joining together, and is probably applicable to one who leagued with spirits.

The sixth term, *Shoelobh*, or consulter with familiar spirits, signifies also *Pytho*, or the spirit of divination; *Obh* signifies a bottle, and probably a vial was used in divining.

The seventh word, *Jidegnoni*, or wizard, is the man magician of the fourth species.

The eighth term is *Doresh Hammethim*, or necromancers. *Hammethim* signifies the dead, and this term is considered applicable to those who raised ghosts.

Three or four of these are Glanvil's interpretations of the Hebrew terms, and confirmed by the Jews of this place.

Amongst the Hebrews, settled in Syria, there are none who profess to practise magic; but I conversed with two rabbins, in Jerusalem, and a layman, Mr. Amslak, who assured me that if they dared to go against the ordinances of their religion, which forbad all sorcery, they had the power,

by transposing certain verses of the Pentateuch, of performing what I would consider miracles.

This I presume to doubt, though I believe the two rabbins are very learned men, and my friend, *Amslak*, a very worthy person.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXVII.

TO MRS. COGAN.

MY DEAR MADAM, Tyre, Oct. 1, 1827.

AFTER a third visit to Tyre, and a journey from Jordan to the Lake Asphaltes, I proceed to give you some account of my route.

I hired three donkeys to take me and my equipage to Nazareth, a journey of two days and a half from Tyre. For the first twenty miles, our route lay across the summit of a lofty chain of Lebanon, which in some places overhangs the sea. The path was often on the edge of a terrific precipice, where a single false step made all the difference between life and death. The awful grandeur of the scenery equalled any thing I beheld, either in Wales or Switzerland.

Leaving Acre five miles to the East, we stretched

along the beautiful plain of Zebulon; and on the third morning we entered Nazareth.

The capital of Gallilee is now a little village containing two thousand inhabitants, chiefly Christians; it is delightfully situated on a gentle acclivity, hemmed in on all sides by mountains; a valley of about two miles and a half in length directly faces the village.

I proceeded to the Latin Convent to take up my abode, but my reception was far from flattering. I was dressed in the miserable attire of an Arab peasant (for the country was in such a disturbed state that the life of every English traveller was in jeopardy), so the monks considered I was not in a condition to dispense much alms. They told me very gruffly they could not think of admitting a man from the infected towns through which I had passed; that the plague was probably in my baggage, perhaps on my person (I looked pale from fatigue); and, therefore, the most they could do would be to give me an empty magazine on the ground floor, which had been a carpenter's workshop.

I thanked the good fathers for their hospitable

offer, and ordered my luggage to be taken to the house of the Greek priest. I was resolved to see if hospitality, without regard to rank, would procure me a welcome from the *Papas*, and if it did not, to go to an Arab hut.

"My good *Abouni*," I said to him, "I have come to your gate to demand hospitality: I am a poor Englishman; I am not of your creed, but I am a weary traveller, and seek the shelter of your roof."

"Come in," said the good old priest, "you are a Christian, that is enough; eat and drink whatever you find here, and remain as long as you please."

I was more delighted than I can tell you; the moment I was left alone I doffed my pauper attire for a splendid Turkish uniform, and presented myself to my host in the kitchen to his great astonishment. He gazed on what he called my transfiguration with apparent pleasure, and his two daughters, very pretty girls, changed their contemptuous frowns to very tender glances.

I accoutred my servant with a superb sword and silver handled pistols, and, in this state, I

again visited the Latin Convent. The monk who officiated as porter, and who, a few hours before, treated me like a dog, no longer recognized me; he bowed to the earth at my approach, and interlarded his compliments every instant with *Milordo* and *vostra Excellenza.* Blessed be the man, thought I, who invented an embroidered coat.

In the mean time the monks of the convent gathered round me; the men who shunned me as an infected, "pestilential fellow," now contended for the honour of showing me the holy places; one apologized for the rudeness of the porter in not admitting "my Lordship," another begged me to excuse the prior for being ignorant of my rank when he talked to "my Excellency" of the plague, and all entreated of me to take up my quarters in the convent. "Signor Padrè," said I to the monk who formerly offered me the magazine on the ground floor, "when I came to you as a poor English pilgrim you refused to receive me, but now, when I come to you as an English traveller, who seeks no charity, but perhaps bestows it, you give me welcome; but I refuse your hospitality, I

will not enter under your roof." I took my leave of the gaping monks, and returned to my worthy *Papas*.

The morning after my arrival I received a packet of letters by a "forced courier" from Acre; one contained a firman from Abdallah Pacha for travelling through his province, for this I was obliged to apply to the Austrian Consul, Signor Catafago, for such is the influence which the British Consuls possess in Syria, that to procure a common passport, I had to beg it from a foreign Consulate. Signor Catafago, whom I had never seen, very politely complied with my request, and gave me the first positive intelligence of the intention of the allies to carry the treaty of June into effect.

I had another letter from Damietta desiring me to get out of Syria as fast as possible, *as an engagement was daily expected between the British and Turkish fleets*. The rumour spread like a wildfire over the country, that the English and French had declared war against the Porte, and consequently that all Franks were the Sultan's foes. I was very awkwardly situated, in the interior of a country in which my nation was de-

nounced, and not knowing whether it would be better to proceed or turn back. One circumstance alone promised me security, and that was, the Sultan was now execrated by the Syrians ten times more than the infidels. He had sent orders into the different pachaliks to raise recruits for the new disciplined troops. I happened to pass through the different towns where the conscription was going on: such a thing never had been heard of before as carrying off the inhabitants by force to become soldiers, and the consternation it occasioned was tremendous. I heard fathers and mothers, in the open streets of Nazareth and Sephoura, calling down curses on the soldiers who dragged away their children, and on the Sultan who commanded them to do so.

It was easy to perceive the indignation of the whole country was against the government, and that the infidels were hardly looked upon as foes, but rather as the instruments of vengeance. I therefore determined to continue on my journey to Jordan and Jerusalem and from thence to Egypt, where, whatever might be the issue, I considered myself secure.

The Latin Convent was rebuilt in 1730, on the

site of an old church, which stood upon the spot pointed out by tradition as the habitation of the Virgin Mary. Notwithstanding the sneers of English travellers, there is good reason to believe that tradition has faithfully preserved the sites of many places of which we read in the Scriptures. This Convent of Nazareth, which is called the Church of the Annunciation, is mentioned, according to Pococke, by writers of the seventh and twelfth centuries.

In a cave beneath the church the monks point out the dwelling of the virgin, her kitchen and bedroom; and in the church a miraculous pillar is shown, the middle of which is wanting, while the base and capital remain; the former standing on the floor of the church, the latter evidently suspended from the roof, to which it is clumsily attached. The expenditure of the Convent is one thousand pounds per annum: there are fourteen monks, and ample accommodation for double as many. In the church there is shown a picture of our Saviour, painted from a traditionary description, which Dr. Clarke calls "a spurious Letter of *Publius Lentulus* to the Roman Senate." This description, whether spurious or genuine,

certainly agrees with the impression which the scriptural account leaves on the mind. It represents our Saviour as " a man of stature somewhat tall and comely, with a very reverend countenance, such as the beholders may both love and fear; his hair the colour of a filbert full ripe to his ears, whence downwards it is of a brighter tint, somewhat curling, or waving about his shoulders; in the midst of his head is a partition of the hair, after the manner of the Nazarites; his forehead plain and delicate; his face without spot or wrinkle, beautified with a comely red; his nose and mouth exactly formed; his beard thick; his hair not any great length, but forked; his look innocent; his eyes gray, clear, and quick in reproving, awful in admonishing, courteous in speaking; very modest and wise; in proportion of body well shaped. None has ever seen him laugh, but many have seen him weep. A man for his beauty surpassing the children of men." If I were to describe the children of the Jews in Jerusalem, who up to the age of ten and eleven are the loveliest creatures in the world, I would employ the terms used in this ancient description, to give an idea of their features.

The shop in which Joseph is supposed to have worked is converted into a chapel. There is a picture over the altar, representing a mechanic, with the implements of a carpenter around him, and holding a youth by the hand.

In another chapel a rock is exhibited, on which it is said Christ eat with his disciples.

A couple of miles from the town the precipice is pointed out, down which the people of Nazareth sought to throw our Lord; and in the opposite extremity of the valley the Greek papas conducted me to the fountain of the virgin, in the interior of the Greek church; and here it was, he assured me, that the angel came to her and said, "Hail, thou that art highly favoured; the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women!" The Latins, on the other hand, assert that the annunciation took place in their chapel;—which is to be believed?

"Græcia mendax, vel Roma mendacior?"

The pilgrim need not trouble himself about the authenticity of the tradition which gives to every cave in Palestine a sacred name. In Nazareth, at least, there is a religion in the place which needs not the adventitious aid of superstition to

excite enthusiasm. The peaceful valley of Nazareth, hemmed in from the noisy world by an amphitheatre of verdant hills, is the spot which one might imagine the meek and lowly Jesus would have chosen for his earliest abode. The silent paths, the deep ravines in the eastern hill might well have served for meditation; every morning during my stay in Nazareth I visited these solitudes, calling to my mind the miracle of morality and philosophy which came from the little town before me, and reflecting on the revolution in religion, which every country had undergone since "Jesus of Nazareth" first broached his doctrines in the village synagogue, the site of which was then before me. The feelings these reflections inspired were intense; and, seated on a cliff which commanded a view of the village and the valley, I gave them vent in the following feeble verses:

LINES

WRITTEN IN NAZARETH.

Jesus of Nazareth! on high all hail;
Jesus of Nazareth! on earth all praise:
Weak though my voice, let mercy still prevail;
Hear me, Redeemer, and direct my ways.

If ever folly urged my tongue in vain
To take thy sacred name, thy wrath forego:
If ever madness worked upon my brain,
To doubt thy holy word, thy pity show.

Here, gracious Lord, where thou didst humbly wear
The garb of poor humanity, and pass'd
The dawn of mortal life, vouchsafe to hear
The voice whose homage turns to thee at last.

Here was that vast beneficence design'd
Which e'en embraced the universe, and bless'd;
Which made "*a chosen people*" of mankind,
Of earth a Zion, spread from east to west.

Here was that fine morality matured
Which all philosophy doth far exceed;
Which in the wreck of systems hath endured,
And still endures, a never ending creed.

Here is the spot where thou didst condescend,
Subject to earthly parents, to remain;
Whereon thy infant wisdom did attend
Thy virgin mother, wondering at the strain.

Here were thy sayings treasured in her heart,
All worldly words and wisdom far above,
Tidings of peace on earth did they impart,
Good will towards man, and never ending love.

However infelicitous the mode of conveying my impressions, I trust to your indulgence for their reception. After sojourning five days in

the most interesting part of Palestine, I bid adieu to my worthy host Heremia, to whose hospitality I cordially recommend all travellers. The customary present at departure all over Syria for a gentleman and his servant is a dollar and a half per day. He bestowed his benediction on me as I passed his threshold for the last time; and in the perilous excursion I was undertaking to the Jordan I thought the prayers of a good man, whatever was his creed, could do me no harm.

I am, my dear Madam,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXVIII.

TO THE REV. H. CAMBELL.

MY DEAR SIR, Alexandria, Oct. 20, 1827.

I SET out from Nazareth to visit the Jordan, a journey of twelve hours across a wild country, as usual, accompanied by a single attendant, and so attired as to avoid exciting the cupidity of the Bedouins. About seven miles from Nazareth, we halted at the foot of Mount Tabor; the heat was insupportable, the thermometer in the shade stood at 102, and even my Bedouin guide complained of the excessive warmth.

Mount Tabor is a small isolated mountain of a conical form, commanding a splendid view of the plain of Esdrælon, which extends about four and twenty miles in length, its breadth is from ten to twelve. In the scriptures this magnificent plain is sometimes called the Valley of *Jezreel.*

It was here "the Lord discomfited Sisera, and all his chariots, and all his host with the edge of the sword, before Barak;" and in latter times, it was here that Kleber with one thousand five hundred men sustained the attack of twenty-five thousand Syrians; and where Napoleon with a reinforcement of six hundred men routed the whole Syrian army.

The next place worthy of note where we stopped, was "Cana of Galilee," where the miracle of changing the water into wine was performed at the marriage feast; there is a small chapel here in which they show a large stone water vase, which they assured me was the identical one in which the miraculous change took place.

I saw in this neighbourhood the Persian manna plant, which Dr. Clarke calls *Hedysarum Alhagi;* it is a thorny plant, but altogether different from the tarfa or tamarisk manna plant, which I saw on the shores of the Red Sea. Leaving Tiberias and the Mount of Beatitude on our left, we proceeded for five hours along a country, in some parts cultivated, in others mountainous and barren. In the evening we arrived at the head of the Jordan, or about two hours' journey below that

part of the lake where the Jordan rises. When we came down on the river, there were the ruined buttresses of an old Roman bridge, and close to them a bridge of a comparatively modern date, probably of Saracen construction, which goes by the name of Jacob's Bridge.

While I was bathing in the Jordan, I was not well pleased to observe a party of Bedouins approach the river, and still less content to see one of these marauders very tranquilly take possession of my carpet which was spread on the beach. I judged it best to let my Arab manage with the fellows, and shortly after I saw him drag the carpet from the robber, and on coming nearer, heard him swearing by his beard, that I was a Moslem, and a servant of Abdallah Pacha of Acre. If there were any of them acquainted with Turkish, I should probably have got knocked in the head; but luckily not one of them knew a word of any language but Arabic, and in this I gave them the *Salaam Aleikoum* with great confidence, and had the gratification to see them walk off. The *khan* on the Bridge of Jacob separates the *pachaliks* of Acre and Damascus. The Jordan, or *El Gor*, is in this place about sixty feet wide;

where I bathed mid-channel, there was scarcely five feet water; properly speaking it is but a stream, and I presume the Hebrew term is like the Arabic *bahr*, applicable to a river or an ocean, as the word *gebel* signifies a small hill or a lofty mountain. It begins at the northern extremity of the Sea of Galilee, at Charazin; it receives, the Arabs say, twenty rivulets along the valley of the Jordan, and falls into the Lake Asphaltes, or the Dead Sea; its length being about seventy miles. Where Burckhardt crossed it, it was eighty paces broad and three feet deep. In the winter season it still continues to inundate the narrow part of the valley.

From the Jordan I continued my route along the shores of the Sea of Galilee, or more properly, of the Lake of Gennesaret, or Tiberias. After a fatiguing ride of five hours, we reached the town of Tabariè, or Tiberias; a little to the south of the new walls the ruins of the ancient Tiberias extend a considerable way along the shore. While I was exploring some sepulchral excavations in the side of the adjacent mountain, a Bedouin, to my great surprise, started from the floor of one of these caves, and rushed towards the entrance;

he had probably been sleeping, and was enraged at my intrusion; that part of valour which is called discretion, I put in practice on the present occasion, I took to my heels and never looked behind me till I arrived at the foot of the mountain, where I had left my guide in charge of the mules. The first thing I did was to seize the gun which was slung across my mule, and I had just time to cock it, when I perceived my pursuer about ten yards off, gesticulating violently, and pointing his musket at me: he was alone, and might have fared badly had we proceeded to extremities, for it was ten to one if his rusty match-lock was in order, and my servant was now beside me sword in hand. I simply kept the gun to my shoulder, regarding him steadily; he retreated a few steps, and cried out "*Magnoun enti?*" "Are you mad?" my Arab roared in reply, "*Yva magnoun kitir*," "Yes, we are very mad;" the Bedouin seemed to believe him, for he ran up the side of the mountain like a goat, and we soon lost sight of him.

Not far from the town are the hot baths of Tiberias: there are four sources; one of them is sulphureous; in this the thermometer rose to

200°; two of the others are chalybeate. The bed of the stream is incrusted with a red deposit, and along the margin of the lake, for a hundred yards, where this stream falls into the lake, the water is of a scarlet hue.

There are two baths fitted up; one for women, the other for men. Hundreds of scorbutic and rheumatic patients flock annually from all parts of Syria. When I entered the bath, there were five miserable objects extended on the marble pavement: they had been in the water, and were now going through the second process of perspiring on the hot stones.

The water was so very hot, it was a considerable time before I could immerse my whole body in the bath. On coming out, an old sheik, who attended the bath, placed me on a marble slab; he repeated several prayers over me, and after twisting my joints and consoling me with the assurance that I had a diseased liver, which he felt through my back-bone, I took a refreshing draught of cold sherbet, and proceeded towards Tiberias.

I again passed the tombs in the mountain, which are supposed to be those out of which

came the miserable objects who accosted our Saviour as he passed: "And when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him, out of the tombs, a man with an unclean spirit." Some say it was on the opposite shore, supposed to be the country of the Gadarenes (who are as inhospitable now as they were in the days of the Apostle), that Christ caused the evil spirits to leave the possessed persons and to enter the herd of swine.

The version of Tremellius favours the supposition, that the devils drove the swine into the lake without entering them corporeally. "They went," he says, "not *in gregem*, but *ad gregem porcorum*."

The thermal springs, near Tiberias, are either the baths of Emmaus, or, from the description of Josephus, must be at no great distance from the spot where they were. Josephus has given a very erroneous account of the length and breadth of the lake; the former, he says, is twelve miles and a half. From the time it occupied me in going from one extremity to the other, I am pretty sure the length must be eighteen miles, and the aver-

age breadth five miles. In the neighbourhood of Tiberias the depth is considerable: six or seven yards from the shore I was beyond my depth, and the inhabitants say, that to the north of the town, close to the shore, the depth is from forty to fifty feet.

I had an opportunity of observing how very little wind agitated the surface of the lake, especially when opposed to the current of the Jordan, which intersects it for a considerable length. There is now not a single boat on the lake; the last that was on it was wrecked the year before Burckhardt visited Tiberias.

Josephus gives an account of a naval engagement on the lake, between Vespasian and the Jews, in which six thousand five hundred of the latter were slain. The fleets, however, must have consisted of boats. It is evident "the ships" mentioned in the Scriptures were fishing boats; for when the Apostles "inclosed a great multitude of fish," we are immediately after informed "they filled both the ships, so that they began to sink."

The Arab word *mercub* is indifferently applied to a boat or a ship; so that I imagine, in many

passages which have afforded some persons a pretext for cavilling, the fault is in our version, and not in the text.

There is a vast quantity of fish in the lake; but the people are so indolent, that they give themselves no trouble to provide either boats or nets. In Tiberias I saw some fish which I thought peculiar to the Nile: the *charamoot*, the *binni*, and the *mesht*, or *Nile-sole*. The lake furnishes the only water used in Tiberias.

Tiberias has the most imposing appearance from without of any town in Syria, but within the walls it is as wretched as any other. As I had no letters for Tiberias, save one for the *Rabbi Mendal*, a learned Hebrew, who unfortunately died a short time before my arrival, I was in danger of sleeping in the streets on the first night of my arrival; I tried every house, Christian and Mahometan, and nowhere could I procure a night's lodging: a poor widow at last took compassion on the forlorn face of my servant, and consented to receive us: as is the custom of the country, we were shown on the roof of the house, which was tantamount to being walked into a drawingroom. We spread our carpets

beneath the canopy of heaven, and blessed our stars that we were at length lodged *on* a hospitable roof. The parapet is commonly made of wicker work, sometimes of green branches, which mode of constructing the upper part of the house is as ancient as the days of Nehemiah: "So the people went forth and brought them (branches), and made themselves booths, every one upon the roof of his house."

Lord Verulam's spirit of nature fell plentifully on us in the night; but we were too wearied to be easily disturbed. In the morning, however, we were living evidences of the truth of the proverb, that "the king of the fleas holds his court in Galilee!"

"Our most kind hostess" was not yet stirring when we descended from our *celestial* chamber, and we summoned our guide to prepare the mules. The fellow was so pleased with his quarters, that he grumbled a good deal at parting with the widow.

Before leaving Tiberias, I visited the church, which tradition points out as the site of St. Peter's house. So early as the sixth century, the itinerary of Antoninus makes mention of this church,

which is supposed to have been rebuilt by the Greeks of the Lower Empire, as standing on the site of the Apostle's dwelling. In Tiberias also the tomb of Lokman, the supposed author of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments, was formerly shown; but no one now seemed acquainted with the precise spot.

The route from Tiberias to Jerusalem, by Samaria, was beset with so much peril, that I was obliged to return to Nazareth, and from thence to cross the country to Jaffa. The journey occupied three days: in that short space of time, I was five times in the hands of robbers. The three first encounters I had not much to complain of; with good words and good humour I was able to compound with the banditti—once for twenty piastres, another time for fifty, and the third time sixty. This they affected to call a lawful toll, or *guffer;* but the fourth attack in the mountains between Nazareth and Acre was the most formidable of all, as the banditti were Bedouins, and made their first salute by a discharge of musquetry. When we were attacked, we were skirting along the foot of a barren mountain, about

an hour's ride from the plain of Zebulon. I was the first to perceive half a dozen heads rising from behind a stone wall immediately above us; spears and muskets were the next things which I observed, and shortly after a Bedouin horde, consisting of eight men, rushed down the mountain to intercept us. My servant endeavoured to urge on his mule; but the attempt was unsuccessful. I was more fortunate; and though I had a couple of shots fired after me, I was out of their reach in a very few minutes. When I drew up, I discerned the robbers taking my baggage off the mule, and saw every thing I possessed, clothes and carpet spread on the ground, ready for distribution. I made up my mind to return, galloped back to the great surprise of all, and commenced *salaaming* my plunderers: one fellow seized hold of my bridle, and ordered me to dismount! I pushed him from the horse's head, and addressed myself to him who seemed to be the chief: "I have come here," I said, "not as a prisoner, but as your guest; you pursued me, but I was not overtaken; and of my own accord I now throw myself amongst you:

and he who lifts his hand against the friend who seeks him, is no Arab, he is a Turk and a Caffre!"

This speech had a prodigious effect. I sat down on the ground, and lit my pipe with a small lens, which mode of extracting fire from the rays of the sun, they could not at all understand.

"Do you not see," said my servant, "that my master, the hakkim, is not like other men, he can bring down fire from heaven, and he can bring down maledictions too."

"I can *call* blessings on the heads of those who use me well," said I; "and as I see it is your intention so to treat me, this meeting may prove a joyful one for us all."

I never beheld more ferocious features than those which were around me; murder and robbery were marked therein; and while I spoke I expected to get knocked in the head every moment, but I perceived there was a disposition to relent, so I pulled out a packet of James' powders, which I carried in my turban, and, dividing the packet into eight parts, I gave one to each, with an injunction to reserve it for the hour of sickness,

and to think of the *hakkim* who lit his pipe with the celestial fire. I left no time for answering, but threw a couple of pounds of tobacco and half as much coffee amongst them. I proceeded immediately to replace my luggage on the mule; but while I was doing so I observed one fellow secreting my carpet, and another my coffeepot; I affected not to perceive the theft; and after giving a *present* of three *adlies* to the chief, I hurried off my servant, and salaamed them till I got clear. On my arrival in Jaffa I got a hint from the Governor, that my nation being at war with the Porte, I should have to remain there till Abdallah Pacha sent orders to Jaffa about the treatment of English travellers. I assented to every thing; but the moment I got out I ordered mules to be in readiness outside the gates in two hours; and at the expiration of that time, fatigued as I was with my wearisome journey from Tiberias, I set off for Jerusalem. Twelve miles from Jaffa, the ancient Joppa, is Ramah, the site of Arimathea, where Joseph dwelt, whose tomb served for our Lord. As it was late, I took up my abode for the night in the Greek convent. My

host was an old Papas from Salonica, and was lying extremely ill with an attack of acute rheumatism; he gave himself up completely, and refused to take medicine: I insisted, however, on dosing him, and relieved him before morning. The village, which contains three thousand inhabitants, was in an uproar when I arrived; five and twenty young men had been carried away the preceding night for the new troops of the Sultan, the women were lamenting in the open streets, the men were bewailing the hard fate of their sons and brothers, and all were bestowing abuse on the Sultan and his officers.

There are many remarkable places in the vicinity of Ramah: the plain of Sharon, in which however "the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley" are no longer to be seen. The ancient *Lydda* also is about three miles from Ramah, and the place where Samson is supposed to have destroyed the three thousand Philistines who stood on the roof of the house to see the strong man's feats. I left Ramah for Jerusalem three hours before sunrise; our route first lay across an uncultivated plain for six or seven miles; we

then entered the almost impracticable defiles of the mountains of Judæa, which extend in succession from the vicinity of Ramah to Jerusalem.

It would be impossible for any vehicle on wheels to go this route, and even for mules it is extremely difficult. Near a village called Bugos I was accosted by a well dressed man, mounted on a superb charger, and richly accoutred; he turned out to be the brother of the famous *Abou Goosh*, the chief of their mountains. He asked me who I was, and whence I came; I replied, I was an Englishman, coming from Egypt; he told me, without much ceremony, that what I said was a *kisb*, a lie, that I was no Englishman, he cared not for my passport, my long black beard was enough, he said, to show him I was not English, and I must pay *guffer*, or toll, immediately:—this is a genteel way of robbing in Palestine; and the demand has been varied in about a dozen instances, in which I have been waylaid, from ten piastres to five hundred. I peremptorily refused to pay one paras, and rode on; he followed me for about five minutes, and, coming close to me, said, in no very

pleasing tone, " Before you reach Jerusalem you will repent of this!" He galloped on before me, and I had very little doubt he hurried on to put his threat into execution. I prepared my pistols, and pursued my journey with very uncomfortable feelings.

Till we entered the Valley of *Elah*, where Saul defeated the Philistines, I met with nothing to create alarm; but here, from the side of the mountain, a party of men, who appeared waiting for us, made signals to us to stop. I took my pistols from the holsters and prepared for action: they made signs to me to throw down my arms, while they did so with their own, and gave me to understand they were coming in friendship, and meant no violence; the guide assured me of their intentions, so I dropped my pistols into the holsters and awaited the result. In a moment we were surrounded by a score of *Abou Goosh's* men; I was well pleased to find they were his people, and not those of his ferocious brother. They behaved civilly; I gave them two dollars, and took three of them with me as a guard to Jerusalem, for which service I was to pay sixty

piastres. They struck off the usual path, to avoid the brother of their chief, who, they said, always kept his word; and, after twelve hours' march from Ramah, of no ordinary fatigue, I reached the long desired city of Jerusalem, and was hospitably received in the Latin Convent.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XXXIX.

TO EDGAR GARSTON, ESQ.

MY DEAR SIR, Alexandria, Oct. 26, 1827.

THE traveller who approaches Jerusalem from Jaffa is amply repaid for the toil and peril of the route, by one of the most splendid prospects his eye has ever dwelt upon. He has passed through a scene of sterility, hardly to be equalled, from Ramah to Jerusalem, he has heard of nothing but the desolation of the Holy City, he has read of little in its modern history but of its miserable aspect, and all at once a noble city rises on his view, with stately walls and lofty towers, and studded with glittering domes of mosques and monasteries. It is indeed a glorious sight, and the very Arab who accompanied me greeted the Holy City (for such the Arabs call it) with all the fervour of admiration; "Quies el

cods wallah, quies kitir!" he exclaimed, "How beautiful, oh God, is the Holy City! how very beautiful!"

Every pilgrim, let his enthusiasm be ever so different from that of those who profess to visit Jerusalem from the suggestions of piety, or perhaps of superstition, must own there is an atmosphere of melancholy magnificence around the structure of Jerusalem, and a death-like stillness in the streets, which he never before observed in the abodes of the living, and which give an air of sanctity to the site of the Temple, and a soul, as it were, to the religion of the place which enshrines the Sepulchre of Christ.

Few travellers, except such as visit Palestine to rail against monastic institutions, who see nothing but the horrors of papacy in the sanctuaries of Jerusalem, and who journey from Jordan to Siloa with a sort of religious monomania which paints nothing on their retina but the informous images of monks, and causes nothing to vibrate on their tympanum but the appalling sounds of the mass-bell; few travellers I say, except such as these, visit the spot which is connected with the history of their religion,

without having their feelings powerfully excited; mine were so, and I gave them words in the form which my mind first presented, and unworthy of the subject as they are I send them to you.

LINES

WRITTEN IN JERUSALEM.

DAUGHTER of Zion! doomed from age to age
To prove the truth of the unerring page;
Thy sullied beauty, thy dejected mien,
Thy desolation still o'ercast the scene;
Thy mournful silence sinks into the heart,
Astounds the sense, and mocks description's art.
A weary pilgrim, here with steps profane
I tread thy paths, participate thy pain,
Recall the sad remembrance of thy fall,
And in the terrors of thy present thrall
Behold the judgments of a hand Supreme,
And trace the sources of redemption's scheme.

"Mournful, oh Zion! are thy ways" indeed,
"They come not to thy feasts," the chosen seed
O'er all the land of Israel hath ceased,
And foes and infidels alone increased.
The scattered remnant of thy race doth roam
O'er earth, without a country or a home;—
"A by-word," an astonishment to men;
Reviled, degraded, and in bonds again.

Where is the regal splendour of thy brow?
Where is "the glory of the Temple" now?

Is the tall mosque to tell the sacred spot
Where stood the house of God? which now stands not.
Is the proud Moslem still to stride the throne
Of Royal David, and his glorious son?
Where is " the Hebrew of the Hebrews" gone?
Where have the treasures of the wise man flown?
Is " the fine gold of Ophir" to be found
In filthy mammon's traffic all around?
Is wisdom now to worldly craft confined?
Has paltry lucre paralyzed the mind?
Where now, alas! is the prophetic strain?
Or were the enraptured accents breathed in vain?
Are Talmud legends to supplant the page
Of sacred songster and of holy sage?
And hath destruction ridden on the blast
Alone, to leave no vestige of the past?
O'erthrown the altar, but alone to yield
The *Jeffalin* to be the sinner's shield?
Is this the compensation for thy fall,
And not the blood the Saviour shed for all?

Father of mercy, graciously ordain
That great atonement be not made in vain;
Let Jew and Gentile bow with one accord,
Before the altar of their common Lord!

Direct the weak, the wicked overawe,
Enlighten all, and vindicate thy law;
Thy promised Kingdom spread from pole to pole,
And make thy chosen people of the whole.
Stay the unhallowed strife which rages here,
Betwixt conflicting creeds, and each draw near
To one true faith, as first for all sufficed,
And merge the name of sect in that of Christ!

Though rancour reigns, where Christian peace alone
Should sit triumphant on her sacred throne,
E'en though my spirit sickens at the scene,
And sense revolts at Superstition's mien;
Far from my bosom be the pride refined,
Of that affected purity of mind,
Which fain would spurn devotion from the tomb
Of Him who died to mitigate our doom!
Far from me may that apathy still be,
Assumed or not, which scorns to bend the knee
Where the Redeemer hung upon the cross
For man's atonement, and for Eden's loss!

Still, while I take my solitary round,
Survey the wonders of this sacred ground,
Shrink at the gloom which overhangs the wall,
And mark the silence that prevails o'er all;
Tread on the heaps long trodden down of old,
By raging bigot, or invader bold;
Pause to refer each ruin to the work
Of time or war, of Titus or the Turk;
Still, thoughtless as I am, emotions rise,
Sceptic or stoick would in vain disguise.

And though the wreck of matter all around
Failed to excite a sense of awe profound,
The scenes connected with salvation rise
And soothe the prospect with celestial dyes.
Here is that Mount of Olives, ever fair,
That Garden of Gethsemane, still here;
Here is that Bethany where Mary grieved,
And Jesus wept, and Lazarus revived:

Here is that Bethlehem where godlike love
First deigned to dawn a beacon from above;
And here that Calvary where mercy gave
The blood of life to triumph o'er the grave!

The arrival of a traveller in the Holy City is so important an event, that the monks of the various monasteries contend with great eagerness for the honour of entertaining the stranger, and look upon the possession of him as a sort of godsend to the convent.

The Latin Convent was the best reputed of all, for the character of its inmates and the reputation of its cheer; I had every reason to be pleased with both. I found the monks extremely courteous, many of them men of unaffected piety, and among the whole number (namely, forty-four), after an intimate acquaintance with them, I can safely say I only knew one whose conduct or conversation was at variance with his vows.

Dr. Clarke has represented them as a set of men weighed down with sensuality and obesity, "larding the lean earth" of Jerusalem as they went along, and having no other employment but the consumption of the fruits of the soil.

The Rev. Mr. Jowett has followed the learned Doctor with unequal steps, but has given to the bitterness of his intolerance an air of religious sentimentality, which has concealed the coarser features of the *odium theologicum* of Dr. C——.

I verily believe that both these gentlemen libelled the Catholic clergy of Jerusalem, and that they are neither so ignorant, so indolent, nor so depraved as they represent them. It is certain our present Sovereign thought better of them and their institutions than the latter gentlemen did; for his Majesty sent them a private donation of two thousand pounds, a very little while ago. It is, however, lamentable to observe the dissensions which exist in this city, between the various sects of Christians; the Turk, the common enemy of each, profits by their feuds, and literally enriches himself on the rancour of conflicting creeds.

There was lately a notable instance of Christian animosity and of Turkish interference, within the walls of the Church of the Sepulchre, in which it was my fortune to assist in the adjustment of the quarrel. It is necessary to premise that the Church of the "Santa Sepulchra," built by Constantine, was burnt down by the Armenians in

1808; the sepulchre itself not being touched, the Armenians were then the richest body in the Turkish nation, and were desirous of obtaining the sole possession of the sacred site, to build a new church at their exclusive cost; the Greeks, however, outwitted them, and procured a firman for rebuilding the church, after the Armenians had the trouble of burning the old one. They finished the building in twelve months; and in 1809 it was opened.

The Greeks, in this instance, behaved tolerably decently towards the other sects, they consented to take some portion of money, towards defraying the expenses, from the Catholics; and, after appropriating to themselves the finest chapel, they gave the next largest portion of the building to the Catholics, and divided the remainder between the Armenians, Copts, and Syrians.

The Turks took possession of the keys, and to this day they immure the priests of the various sects who officiate in the Sepulchre, till such time as a stranger pays to have the doors opened; or once a month when there is a sort of general church delivery, the old priests are set at liberty, and a new set are shut up; there were fifteen

Catholic priests immured when I was there, as many Greeks, a dozen of Armenians, six Copts, and four Syrians. These various sects, I am sorry to say, had nothing in common but a feeling of animosity; and the dispute I alluded to had its origin in this predominant feeling.

The Armenians, to get a footing in the church, were forced to pretend submission to the Pope; but no sooner were they installed in the Sepulchre, as orthodox members of the Church of Rome, than they publicly renounced the Pope, and appointed their own pontiff, in the person of their old Patriarch. From that period, they have been constantly encroaching on the property of the holy places; and during my visit to Jerusalem, they took possession, *vi et armis*, of the altar on Mount Calvary, which belonged to the Catholics, and which stands within the walls of the Church of the Sepulchre. The Catholics ejected them from the spot a few days after their usurpation; but the Armenian ecclesiastics rallied in a body round the altar next day, and a scene ensued which ill suited the sanctity of the place.

The Turks looked on with no small pleasure; the quarrel insured an *avanie* on either party; and

the Governor finally interfered to decide on the validity of the title to Mount Calvary. He gave three days to both parties to adduce the necessary arguments; or, in plain English, to bring the bribes! Both parties awaited the result with anxiety, for neither of them knew how much the other gave.

At this juncture I was attending the Governor, who laboured under inflammation of the liver, brought on, I had reason to believe, from the immoderate use of ardent spirits. He had recently arrived from Damascus, and was in much need of money. I endeavoured to ascertain from him in whose favour he intended to decide; and which party had given in the most substantial arguments. I found the scale of *justice* weighed in favour of the Armenians, and that they had given eight thousand piastres while the Catholics had only offered six. This important information I lost no time in conveying to one of the fathers, who waited on me in the Convent, and the result was, that three thousand additional arguments were adduced in favour of the ancient title to Mount Calvary, and the Catholics continue the exclusive possessors of the altar in question.

I visited the Sepulchre on the day for admitting the Catholic clergy. The whole church is four hundred and fifty feet in length, and two hundred and ten in breadth; the dome is one hundred and fifty feet high, and immediately beneath it is the Sepulchre, forty-two feet long and nineteen broad; it consists of two chambers, the outer eight feet square, with the stone on which the angel sat who appeared to the women; in this room there are several silver lamps. In the inner chamber is the tomb, with a new stone laid over the excavation; for the Catholics say the old one was stolen by the Armenians; the slab is five feet five inches long, and two feet seven inches broad. There are about fifty silver lamps here, and the greater number of them kept constantly burning. In the outer chamber there is an aperture in the wall for giving out "the holy fire," which the Greeks pretend they receive from Heaven: deception is carried on within the very walls of the Sepulchre. In the Catholic chapel, the pillar is pointed out to which Jesus was tied, and in the Greek chapel a spot is marked on the marble pavement as the centre of the world. The ascent to Calvary is by eighteen steps, and the hole in

which the cross stood is one hundred and twelve feet from the tomb. The holes which are shown as those in which the crosses of the two thieves were placed, are twelve feet on each side from that of Christ. The Greeks have another hole, some yards distant, which they say is the spot.

About six feet from the hole of the cross, there is an aperture in the rock of a yard long, which is said to be the rent which succeeded the crucifixion. The part of Mount Calvary, which is within the church, is fifty feet square; and the distance from the tomb to the spot where Helena found the cross is three hundred feet. The tomb of Godfrey was pointed out to me, and in a gallery above the church, the warrior's sword and spurs are preserved, both of an enormous size, and are used at the installation of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre. I had some idea of being dubbed; but one or two of the qualifications presented serious impediments; it is necessary to have baptismal certificates from a Catholic priest; to be of noble birth, or at least of noble conduct; to exercise no mean art; to live a life of chastity; to be ready to die in defence of Christianity; and to pay a hundred sequins.

I had the good fortune to be on terms of intimacy with a very worthy Jew, of the name of Amslak. He was a man of good fortune, and reputed over the city to be possessed of great *rabbinical* knowledge. I was in the habit of dining with him almost daily; he talked much of his friend, Mr. Joseph Wolff, the Jewish missionary; the Bibles, he told me, which Mr. W— distributed over the city were collected after his departure, and publicly burnt in the court of the Synagogue.

"But how comes it," said I, "that Mr. W— asserts in his Journal that he left you all but a Christian?"

"We think it uncivil," replied Amslak, "to contradict people who mean well." He pointed with pride to the eighteen quarto volumes of the Talmud, and said, "I know every word of them." Amidst other information, I learned from Amslak that the Jews believe the torments of hell not to exceed twelve months' duration.

He showed me in the Talmud an ancient legendary history of our Saviour, and acknowledged almost every miracle recorded in the New

Testament; but affirmed that it was in his power, by cabalistic arts, to do the same, if he dared to do what the religion forbad. I do not believe it was in his power, for I had proof enough that the cabalistic science of the most celebrated sorcerer in Syria, the Hebrew prophet whom I met in Alexandria and Beirout, was gross deception.

When I talked to Amslak of my being in the vicinity of Mount Sinai, he shook his head and said, "No one knows where Mount Sinai is: we know that Aaron is buried in the valley, betwixt the Red Sea and Syria; we know that our father Abraham, and Jacob, and Isaac, sleep in Hebron, eight hours hence; we know the tomb adjoining Bethlehem is that of our mother Rachel; we know the splendid sepulchre by Siloa was constructed by Absalom; we know that yonder sepulchre is that of Samuel; but none of us know where Sinai stands, or where Moses sleeps.

That part of my friend's information which savoured most of the marvellous was his description of the miraculous foundation of the Temple, or rather of the mosque which has succeeded it. The entire structure, he asserts, is built on a huge

rock, which is suspended in the air; and beneath this unsupported rock the old manuscript copy of the Pentateuch, the two tables of stone, and the golden candlesticks are deposited.

On inquiry among the Turks, I was assured of the same fact, and that some years ago the vacuum was concealed by a wooden partition, as every pregnant woman who looked down invariably died of terror.

The fact is, I believe that the Mosque of Omar, which undoubtedly is situated on the site of the Temple, is built on an immense rock, one angle of which only is connected with the solid mass, so that beneath there is a spacious grotto, with a small stream, where the sacrifices were prepared.

Whenever I dined with Amslak, I observed he took a goblet of wine in his right hand before he sat down, and blessed it; he also took a cake of bread, broke it, invoked a blessing on it, and divided it amongst his family: this was the grace; and he informed me the custom was observed by the ancient Hebrews, and that no Jew would sit down to eat without taking bread and wine, and blessing both.

He took me to a Hebrew marriage, being de-

sirous (although it was not usual to let Christians be present at this ceremony) to show me every thing connected with his religion. We first went to the Synagogue, a miserable hovel, more like a stable than a place of worship, and where my guide could not help remarking, "This is all that remains to us for a temple." He pointed out the bridegroom to me, clad in a white robe, pale as death, and apparently under the influence of terror; he was quite a boy, and when he attempted to join in the sacred epithalamium, which the Rabbi and the congregation chanted, his voice trembled so, that I really felt for the poor boy. The hymn of joy was sung in a most lugubrious tone, and, compared to it, the music of the Arabs was melody itself.

After repeating some verses of the *Torah*, we proceeded to the bridegroom's house. In the court yard we found the fair daughters of Israel assembled in great numbers, and crying as the Egyptians do at wakes and weddings.

In a saloon, ornamented with a gaudy canopy, stood the bride, elevated on a pair of wooden clogs, inlaid with mother of pearl; over her was flung a transparent veil, and on her head was

placed a crown of flowers, interwoven with strung pearls; the vermilion on her cheeks was laid on with no unsparing hand; her side face presented a blazing circle of circumscribed scarlet, relieved by an inordinate arch of black *surmè* on her eyebrows. Beside her stood two corpulent matrons, holding lighted candles close to her countenance; and opposite to her were stationed the Rabbi, and the disconsolate looking youth who was about entering the happy state. On inquiry, I found he had just completed his fifteenth year; the lady had not yet seen her twelfth summer. I could not help riveting my eyes on her apparel, which was literally covered with one mass of gold and silver ornaments.

My friend Amslak touched my elbow three or four times, and told me in a whisper not to look too much. Heaven knows I was influenced by the purest sentiment of compassion and curiosity. The beauty of the bride was quite resistible.

After a long silence, the Rabbi took a goblet of wine, chanted over it for some minutes, put it to his lips, and then presented it to the parents of the parties. He next took the ring, exhibited it to the company, and every individual exclaimed in

his turn, "*Ma shalla!*"—"How very fine!" it was then put on the finger of the blooming damsel, whose hand resembled more a shoulder of mutton than the appendage to a human arm.

Then Amslak, who was regarded as chief man of the feast, in consideration of his being the head of the Jews in the Holy City, was allowed the honour of throwing a fine woollen cloth, such as is worn in the synagogue, over the heads of the happy pair; and there they remained covered up, standing in close contact, while a blessing was invoked on them; during which I carefully observed the motions of the said woollen cloth, to discover if the lips of the contracting parties were to ratify the compact; but the knees of the happy man were alone in motion, visibly knocking against each other, whilst the head of the bashful bride was drawn back to the greatest possible distance from him who stood trembling before her. The Rabbi then took a glass vase, resembling a dome, and threw it out of the window, as a type of the destruction of the Temple, and said, in a loud voice, "Remember, all human joy is mixed with sorrow." Every body groaned except myself and the poor bridegroom, who appeared to be speechless.

The marriage settlement, consisting of a large roll of parchment, was now brought in and read aloud. The Rabbi swore the young husband to fulfil every stipulation therein, by taking hold of his right hand and squeezing it. The happiness of the two children was now complete.

The "Marito Doloroso" came round the room, kissing the hand of all the guests, who presented him some with paras, some with piastres, and one with a golden *adlie*, in consideration of the title of "Milordo," with which he was greeted every moment.

We now walked out, in pity to the poor boy, to whom the felicity of the happy state seemed quite overwhelming. In all probability at that moment he would have been more delighted to have been spinning a top with his young companions, than to have been placed beside a girl he never saw before, in the completion of a rite, the knowledge of which, though devoutly to be desired, in the present case was little to be expected.

After the marriage, Amslak conducted me to his tomb; to die in Jerusalem, and to be buried near its holy walls, this excellent man had relinquished a comfortable home in Europe, and had

actually dug his grave; a practice which many other European Jews had likewise observed.

I left my friend to contemplate his yawning sepulchre, and made the circuit of the walls of Jerusalem, which I accomplished on foot, in one hour and ten minutes. I ascended the Mount of Olives, rather for the sake of the splendid view of the city from its summit, than to see the traditionary impression of our Saviour's foot as he ascended into heaven. I pass over many such other places in the mountain which bear the name of holy, and whose description, from the mouth of an ignorant *cicerone*, is sickening to the traveller. The effrontery of the servants of the different convents is offensive in the extreme. They have pointed out to me the precise spot where Judas hung himself, where the Virgin dined with her cousin, where the rich man lived, and where Lazarus asked for the crumbs of his table; and when I said that both these persons existed only in a parable, they accused me of impiety.

In the valley between the Mount of Olives and the walls of Jerusalem, on the eastern side of the Brook Cedron, which is now without water, I visited " the Sepulchre of the Virgin." The

Greeks were celebrating the festival of the Madonna, firing pistols before the altar, at which half a dozen priests were officiating, and squabbling in the most indecent manner on the very steps of the altar.

The grotto was crowded with Greek and Turkish women; and the husbands of the latter were amusing themselves by firing pistols close to my ear, and pulling off the turbans of their neighbours. But what most astonished me, was to hear the Greeks, on coming out, boasting of what a good festival they had, of the great many shots that had been fired, as if they literally hoped to make sure of heaven by a "holy violence."

I passed along the valley to the south, between the Mount of Olives and the Mount Moriah, on which the Temple stood; and, near the bridge of the Cedron, visited the sepulchres of Absalom and Zachariah, which are hewn out of the solid substance of the mountain. These are the most imposing monuments in Palestine. The tomb of Absalom is ornamented with twenty-four Doric pillars; that of Zachariah is unopened, and the Jews pretend that the treasures of ancient learning are concealed within it.

Proceeding along the valley of Hinnom, I observed the ancient sepulchres of the Hebrews, and passed the whole day in visiting their interior. In some chambers I found the remains of paintings, in which nothing but landscape was represented; in two, on the sides of the doors, I saw the traces of Hebrew characters; but what struck me as most singular, was the exact conformity of the interior of the sepulchral chambers, cut in the solid rock, to those I had seen in Thebes.

The object of my search, however, was to find either *sarcophagi* or skeletons; but, though I visited forty or fifty sepulchres at least, I did not find one remnant of what I sought. It was evident that embalming was not a Hebrew custom; and as the Jews decidedly borrowed the form of their sepulchres from the Egyptians, one might have expected the process of embalming would likewise have been adopted.

I next made an excursion to the tombs of the kings: though they are distant but a mile from the walls, the inhabitants are independent of Jerusalem, and they proved their independence to me, by robbing me of six Spanish dollars, and

desiring me to tell the Governor when I returned. As I had nothing more to lose, I proceeded to examine the splendid portico of these sepulchres; the sculpture of the exterior would do honour to the Egyptian chisel, or even to the Grecian.

Having descended through a labyrinth of passages, I entered the sepulchral chambers which, like those of *Gourna*, contain various receptacles for dead bodies; but not a particle of one remained. The doors of the various chambers are all broken; some of them of gray granite, ten inches thick, are lying in fragments, as if some rapacious hand had forced them open. I found the broken lid of a sarcophagus near the entrance of one chamber, and several fragments of sculptured marble.

From the period of my arrival in Jerusalem, I daily proposed a journey to the Dead Sea; but the Governor threw so many obstacles in my way, for the purpose of extorting money, notwithstanding my medical services, and the monks represented so many dangers in the attempt, that I was almost induced to give up all idea of visiting the shores of the desecrated Lake Asphaltes. I resolved, however, on setting out without commu-

nicating my intention to a single individual within or without the walls of the convent. I furnished myself with the miserable costume of the Bedouins of the Wilderness, consisting of a coarse shirt, a leathern girdle, a long knife, a pair of sandals, and some shreds of black worsted for a turban. These I packed up and took with me, giving the monks to understand I was going to Bethlehem.

A few miles from Jerusalem, I put on my Bedouin attire, and despatched my servant to Mar Saba, to await my arrival; the state of the country and the perfidy of the people of Jerusalem rendered these precautions absolutely necessary. I passed the hill of Engedi, two hours' walk from the Holy City: a cave is still pointed out as that in which David and Saul took shelter. My route lay along the Wilderness of Ziph, and a more solitary and desolate journey I never undertook. I proceeded, however, with all the courage I could muster, smoking my short pipe, and occasionally exchanging a *salaam* with the lawless people of the country.

In four hours and a half I reached the Greek Convent of Saint Saba, after traversing for the

last hour a wild ravine, formed by two rugged perpendicular mountains; the sides of which contained innumerable caverns, which once formed a sort of troglodyte city in which the early Christians resided; the tradition of the convent is, that eighty thousand of them were massacred in this valley by the Saracens. The sight of the convent in this desolate place was like a glimpse of Paradise. I repented of every idle word I ever spoke against monastic institutions. It was with great difficulty, however, the good monks would let me in; they surveyed me from the upper walls for a considerable time, and wanted to persuade my servant I was no Christian; he convinced them at last of my being his master, and the doors of the fortress (for such the convent is) were thrown open.

I was shown into a comfortable room, where I enjoyed myself over a good dinner and excellent coffee. I observed, however, that although the monks were aware I was really an English traveller, they could not get over the poverty of my attire; and that they treated my servant with infinitely more deference than they showed me.

The monastery was founded twelve hundred years ago by St. Saba; there is accommodation for sixty or seventy monks; but at present there are only nine, and an Abyssinian devotee, who has been here for some years, and whose only ambition is to be interred near the sepulchre of St. Saba. In one of the upper chambers there is a most extraordinary assemblage of human bones, consisting of the skeletons of from three to four thousand individuals, which the monks assert are the remains of the martyrs who were slaughtered in the valley. On the altar, several skulls are deposited of those who are called saints; and one of these was of so extraordinary a shape, the crown being almost conical, that I tempted the good father with a Spanish dollar, to suffer me to take it; he said, for my sake, he could not allow me to remove it! because it was notorious, that no pilgrim ever took a bone from St. Saba who was not obliged to return it: as the ship in which such a relic is conveyed, never arrives at her destination without misfortune. I prevailed on him, however, to take the dollar, and having put another skull in its place, thereby causing

the apotheosis, perhaps, of some poor Arab, I secreted the head till such time as I should return to the convent.

Having sent for a Bedouin to be my guide, and made him eat with me to be assured of his fidelity, I committed myself to his care, left my servant at the convent, and set out at midnight. The monks provided me with a long Arab gun, which I slung across my shoulder; and thus accoutred we marched through the bed of the Cedron, along the horrible ravine which I entered the day before. At length we got into the plain; and after three hours' march, we observed a Bedouin camp, about a mile before us. To avoid encountering the Arabs, we stretched about two miles to the south, and were lucky enough to reach the barren mountains which bound the west coast of the lake, without meeting a single Arab. The summit of the sterile rock, on which I stood, was about three hundred feet above the level of the gloomy lake below, and the towering mountains on the opposite coast appeared to be about ten miles distant. The moon was shining in all her oriental splendour, on the desecrated scene; the shadows of the rugged promontories

around me were reflected on the lake; but on its surface not a ripple was to be seen; the silence of death was there, and the malediction of heaven was written on the soil! for miles around me there was life in neither air, earth, nor water. I sickened of the prospect, my spirits were completely overpowered.

I reposed on the bare rock for half an hour; my feet were cut in many places with the sharp flints which abound here, and it was with difficulty I could descend the mountain. About six in the morning I reached the shore, and much against the advice of my excellent guide, I resolved on having a bath. I was desirous of ascertaining the truth of the assertion, that "nothing sinks in the Dead Sea." I swam a considerable distance from the shore; and about four yards from the beach I was beyond my depth: the water was the coldest I ever felt, and the taste of it most detestable; it was that of a solution of nitre, mixed with an infusion of quassia. Its buoyancy I found to be far greater than that of any sea I ever swam in, not excepting the Euxine, which is extremely salt. I could lie like a log of wood on the surface, without stirring

hand or foot, as long as I chose; but with a good deal of exertion I could just dive sufficiently deep to cover all my body, but I was again thrown on the surface, in spite of my endeavours to descend lower. On coming out, the wounds in my feet pained me excessively; the poisonous quality of the waters irritated the abraded skin, and ultimately made an ulcer of every wound, which confined me fifteen days in Jerusalem; and became so troublesome in Alexandria, that my medical attendant was apprehensive of gangrene.

I proceeded for three hours, as well as I could, along the iron-bound coast towards Jericho. I found several fresh water shells on the beach, such as I before noticed on the Lake of Tiberias; and also the putrid remains of two small fish, of the size of mullet; which no doubt had been carried down from the Jordan, as well as the shells; for I am well convinced, both from my own observation and from the accounts of the Arabs, that no living creature is to be found in the Dead Sea. I provided myself with a fishing-hook and line in Tiberias, and with some dried fish from St. Saba for a bait. I spent two hours

in catching bitumen, for that was the only thing that came in contact with my line all the time.

Chateaubriand says, he heard a noise on the lake occasioned by the jumping of "legions of little fishes," as the Arabs informed him. I believe the credulity of the author of "The Martyrs" was equal to his eloquence; and that he has described many things in Palestine with great beauty, which he believed with too much readiness. The water has been analyzed, and found to contain about one-fourth of its weight, of various salts; these Chateaubriand states, on the authority of Malte Brun, to be

Muriate of Lime	3,920
Muriate of Magnesia	10,246
Muriate of Soda	10,360
Sulphate of Lime	0,054
	24,580*

* I brought home a bottle of the water of the Dead Sea, which Dr. Wm. Gregory had the kindness to give me the following accurate analysis of:

Chloride of Sodium, with a trace of Bromine . .	9,58
Chloride of Magnesium	5,28
Chloride of Calcium	3,05
Sulphate of Lime	1,34
	19,25

The face of the mountains and of the surrounding country has all the appearance of a volcanic region; and, having resided for some years at the foot of Vesuvius, having visited Solfatara, Ætna, and Stromboli, I was tolerably conversant with volcanic productions. I have no hesitation in saying, that the sea which occupies the sites of Sodom and Gomorrah, Adam Seboim, and Segor, covers the crater of a volcano, and that, in all probability, heaven made that mode of destruction the instrument of Divine vengeance. I must confess I found neither pumice stone nor genuine black lava, but the soil was covered with white porous stone and red veined quartz, which had decidedly undergone combustion.

At Ghor, native sulphur is found in considerable quantities beneath the soil; the inflammable asphaltum, which forms a pellicle over the surface of the water on the western shore, arises from

That is to say, 19,25 per cent. of saline matter. The occurrence of the new body bromine is very interesting; it was only discovered by M. Balard, in the water of the Mediterranean, and has been lately detected by Dr. Turner, in that of the Frith of Forth.

fissures in the rock on the opposite beach; after coagulating in the cold air it cracks into pieces with an explosion, and is drifted over to the western beach. On coming out of the water I found my body coated with it, and likewise with an incrustation of salt about the thickness of a sixpence.

At the northern extremity the Sea is fordable; and here, the Arabs of Saba inform me, there are hot springs bubbling up in the middle of the *Bahr Luth*, or Sea of Lot, as they call the Dead Sea. That species of phosphoric stone which is found in Tuscany, on the supposed site of a volcano, is found on the eastern side. I found large quantities of the fetid limestone called stink stone, on the western mountains; the recent fracture produces a strong smell of sulphuretted hydrogen. The basis of all the western shore is a calcareous rock mixed with silex. Two feet below the sandy surface of the beach I found a strata of red-veined quartz; and below another strata of limestone, a vein of reddish earth. Many of these substances are only found in volcanic countries; at all events, the rugged aspect of the mountains, the terrible ravines on either shore, the uncouth forms of the

jagged rocks, all prove that the surrounding country has been the scene of some terrible convulsion of nature.

The far famed fruit of the tree of Sodom, "which tempts the eye and turns to ashes on the lips," is nowhere to be found on the western shore; and Burckhardt appears to favour the opinion of its having only an imaginary existence, but it does exist in the vicinity of *El Ghor*. I saw one of the apples at Mar Saba; and, perhaps, the only plant in Egypt producing this fruit I discovered at *Koum Ombos*, in Upper Egypt, growing in a corner of the small temple of Isis, facing the Nile; the plant was not quite the height of the Palma Christi, the fruit was the size of the pomegranate; indeed, from the similarity of the fruit and leaves, I consider the Dead Sea apple as a spurious pomegranate. It was, indeed, tempting to the eye, but deceitful to the sense; on opening it it was quite empty, the surface of the rind having only a light floculent sort of cotton attached to it, which was destroyed by the lightest touch; this was the true Dead Sea apple which I saw in Egypt, and which I also found in Mar

Saba; albeit Shaw and Pococke doubt its existence.

There is not a boat on the lake, and, in all probability, never has been. The oldest Arabs have no recollection of ever having seen a boat there. Pliny speaks of cane rafts which the Arabs used to gather the bitumen; but for three centuries, the fact of no boat being on the lake, has been alluded to by travellers. Ali Bey alone, a few years ago, describing the Dead Sea from the summit of a mountain four and twenty miles distant, declares that he distinctly saw the vessels on the lake so agitated by the motion of the waters, that he considers the name of Dead Sea as inappropriately applied. The telescope of this traveller must have been furnished with a very *magnifying* lens.

The most extraordinary circumstance perhaps to be remarked is, that there is no visible outlet to the lake, notwithstanding that the Jordan is continually flowing into it. Dr. Shaw calculates that the Jordan daily sends into the Dead Sea six millions and ninety thousand tons of water, and yet there is never any visible increase or diminution

in the height of the water, though Chateaubriand erroneously states that it varies at different periods. Its greatest breadth does not exceed ten miles, and its extreme length about seventy.

One great proof of the destruction of the five cities mentioned by Moses (Strabo speaks of thirteen) being effected by natural means, is the circumstance of Sodom being surrounded with pits of bitumen, as mentioned in the Scriptures. We are to understand from Josephus, that the valley of Siddim, which now forms the lake, abounded with these pits. The Arabs affirm, they still see the ruins of the ancient cities at the northern extremity. I do not know what credit to attach to such accounts; but D'Arvieux and also Josephus say that they likewise saw them.

For twenty hours, having had nothing but a morsel of bread and cheese, we proceeded at the dusk of the evening to retrace our steps. The ascent of the mountain was dreadfully fatiguing; my feet were sore and swollen, and the sharp stones harassed me severely. At length we reached the summit; and had not been long reposing there, when the appalling sound of a human voice was heard, and on looking in the direction from whence

it came, I perceived five Arabs, armed with swords and guns, approaching us.

My Bedouin instantly lay down, and directed me to do the same. "Silence, for your life," said he; "our only hope of escape is in remaining unobserved." Every instant the sounds approached nearer to us; at length we could hear the conversation. I felt a slight palpitation about the heart. No one but the wild Arab traverses this dreary Desert, and I knew he was merciless. But, to my astonishment, my Bedouin bounced up and said to me, "Fear nothing, they are only the Arabs from Jerusalem, coming to fetch salt from the lake." I was soon on my feet; but the moment we were perceived by the party which caused us such terror, off they set at full speed, driving their mules before them, and never once looking behind, precipitately returned the way they came.

My Bedouin pursued them for a quarter of a mile, roaring after them to fear nothing and to return; but it was all in vain; they took us for the advanced guard of a horde of Bedouin robbers, and they never ceased their flight till they reached Mar Saba, about sixteen miles distant.

This unfortunate mistake made a difference of thirty-two miles to them in their journey.

On my return to the Convent, I found them relating to the monks the dreadful attack which had been made on them by at least forty Bedouins, and how they had been pursued by the robbers to the very gates of the Convent.

The explanation produced a scuffle, which cost me a couple of dollars and my Bedouin some blows; but, with the assistance of the monks, peace was restored, and the poor people set out once more on their journey.

The good fathers had given me up for lost, and my servant was lamenting over my untimely fate at the moment of my arrival. I stowed the saint's conical head in a hair sack, and the following morning I set out for Jerusalem; within five miles of the latter place I turned off from the high road, for the purpose of visiting Bethlehem.

Although this town is only six miles from Jerusalem, it is as much as a traveller's life is worth to venture within its walls. Eighteen months ago the inhabitants, who are all Christians, declared their independence: the miserable village does not contain a thousand souls, and yet all the force

of the Pacha of Damascus and of the Governor of Jerusalem is insufficient to subject these rebels.

The first Turkish garrison the Bethlehemites put to the sword, killing forty of the soldiers. The next expedition that was sent against them they likewise defeated, slaying fourteen people of Jerusalem. The Governor next proposed a peaceful meeting, but he was met on the hills which encompass the village with a shower of stones, which obliged him to return.

The Pacha of Damascus next paid a visit, avowedly amicable, but accompanied by a numerous retinue of armed followers. The Bethlehemites placed all their women and effects in the Convent, which serves for a fortress in time of war, and retired to the Desert with their cattle, leaving behind a notice on the market walls, that if the Pacha burned a single house in Bethlehem, they would harass all the country round Jerusalem, and poison every pool.

This threat had the desired effect. The Pacha and his people abandoned the town, and ever since the Bethlehemites have remained in undisturbed possession of their village.

To get to the Convent, I had to pass through

the marketplace. I could not help remarking the ferocious looks of the infamous people of Bethlehem: while their eyes were looking daggers at me, their lips were wreathed in smiles as they addressed me in the lingua franca (a barbarous Italian, which they have all learned at the Convent). "Signior, volir comprar una bellissimo croce?" "Vostra Eccellenza, mi tenir in sacca una santa Vergine ben lavorato." "Cara fratello, in questo scattala si trovar le dodici apostoli." "Benvenuto, Signiore Pellegrino, favorir in casa mia ti mostrar tutti luoghi santo in scaglia." "Stimatissimo Capitano, si volir aver qualche gallanteria della roba santa per vostra moglia?"—The plain English of all which was: "Will you buy a most beautiful cross, Sir?" "Your Excellency, I have got a blessed Virgin in my pocket, highly finished." "Dear Brother, I have got the twelve apostles in this little box." "Welcome, Mr. Pilgrim; pray step into my house, till I show you all the holy places in a shell." "Respected Captain, do you want any *bagatelles* of the holy commodities for your wife?"

I was sick of their importunities: they fawned like dogs while there was a chance of extorting

a piastre from me; but when I refused to purchase any of the holy commodities, their natural ferocity burst forth. One ruffian stuck his knife into my servant's donkey, and I thought it fortunate to lose sight of them without any worse accident. The wound was in the hind part of the donkey, about half an inch deep.

We proceeded immediately to the cave of the nativity, which is beneath the church. Even Dr. Clarke acknowledges the site to be so well authenticated, as to admit of no dispute. It appears, however, that the church of the nativity, in the reign of Adrian, was set apart by the heathens for the worship of Adonis; there is a detailed account of this circumstance in Hieronymus; and we are also informed that the Holy Sepulchre was sacred to the worship of Jupiter, whose statue was found by Helena on the spot, and another of Venus at no great distance. The stable in which our Lord was born is now so disfigured with marble ornaments, that it is impossible to recognise any part of the original excavation; like all the other holy places in Palestine, the stable of Bethlehem is cut out of the solid rock. There is a silver lamp kept

always burning in the place of the manger; and a silver star marks the particular spot where Christ was born.

The church above is supported by a double colonnade of splendid marble pillars; it was built by Helena, but was partly destroyed by the Turks in 1300. Dr. Clarke, with his usual inaccuracy, asserts that it was razed to the ground; but many of the ancient paintings are still extant on the upper walls. I may take this opportunity of stating, that Dr. Clarke, with all his erudition (and no traveller, I believe, possessed more), was a bad observer. I believe he never was intentionally incorrect, and yet the most glaring inaccuracies have crept into his work: in two pages of description of the Dead Sea there are no less than seven errors.

On my return to Jerusalem an old man followed me down the hill of Bethlehem, and told me to return to the Convent, for that four of the Bethlehemites with whom I had a dispute at the Convent had gone on before me, and that I was to be waylaid near the tomb of Rachel, for having refused to take a Bethlehemite guide to Saba. I thought the old man only wanted to get some

piastres from me, so I pursued my route, taking care, however, before I reached the tomb, to load my servant's pistols and my own gun; between us both we were tolerably well armed, and, what was no less important, well mounted.

Abreast of the tomb we saw four men on foot, walking towards us, about sixty yards distant. I told my servant the moment I fired to be prepared for a gallop; the fellows were fast approaching, when I checked their progress with a shot; we galloped away as fast as possible; in a few seconds we heard the discharge of a pistol, but we were already far beyond its reach, and in a very short time were in safety within the walls of Jerusalem.

On my arrival not one of the monks recognised me in my Bedouin attire; two or three ordered me to quit the Convent, but, to their great surprise, I took possession of my old apartment; and when they did ascertain who I was, I had a thousand congratulations on my fortunate escape from all the perils of my late journey.

I found letters from Egypt, warning me of the danger of remaining in Syria, as war was almost certain between the Porte and the allies, so that

I no sooner partially recovered from the wounds in my feet than I bade adieu, for the last time, to the Holy City: I was fortunate enough to arrive at Jaffa without any impediment; but, on my arrival, the vessel I expected to embark in for Damietta I found had sailed the day before.

The Consul here, a miserable Levantine, was attired in the Syrian costume, but with an old fashioned English cocked hat, of which he was excessively vain: like the monks at Nazareth, he formed rather a bad opinion of my finances from my dress, and refused to procure me a lodging. I was obliged to forget for a little my respect for the consular dignity, and to transfer the cocked hat which was lying on the divan from the cushion to the floor. I left the indignant Levantine to eat his pilaw with what appetite he might have, and that night set out for Tyre, where I hoped to meet some vessel bound for Egypt. I had another journey of nearly a hundred miles to undertake; and even on my arrival at Tyre it was but a chance if I should find a vessel. I had the good fortune, however, to be in time for the departure of the very vessel I came in from Damietta; she was to sail the following day;

and the first persons I met on the shore were Captain Hare and my friend Mr. Muller, one of the Beirout missionaries. The modern Sour is situated on a neck of land which was formerly an island, but was joined to the main land by Alexander at the siege of Tyre. There appears to have been two cities of that name adjoining one another, the great Tyre being situated about five miles south of the now peninsular Tyre, which formerly appears, by Strabo's description, to have been only inhabited by sailors and persons connected with the shipping.

The folly of torturing the Scriptures to a literal accomplishment of every prophecy is evinced here; persons not content with the general destruction of a city endeavour to prove that "not a stone remains," because the expression occurs in the ancient prediction. But such miserable attempts are disserviceable to truth and to the sacred volume, which only meant by such expressions that the city should be destroyed, but stones still remain one on the other of the wall of Jerusalem, on the side of the valley of Hinnom, facing the Mount of Olives, and five miles from the modern Sour, on the spot described by Strabo.

On the shore I discovered a great many remains of the ancient Tyre, and a wall of considerable thickness on the north of the ruins. I am not aware that these ruins have been described by any author; they are not on the high road, and are only known to the Arabs, as having a well close to one of the ancient walls.

Unless we acknowledge two ancient Tyres, the prophecies of Isaiah and Ezekiel are at variance; the former says of Tyre, "Thou shalt be built no more, thou shalt never be found again." And the latter declares, "After the end of seventy years the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall return to her hire." Now ancient Tyre was razed to the ground by Nebuchadnezzar five hundred and seventy-three years before Christ, and was *rebuilt* (at least the Tyre on which Sour now stands) in the nineteenth year of the reign of Darius Hystaspes.

In Pliny's time the royal merchants of Tyre were extinct; and "all its nobility," he says, "consisted in its shell and purple dye." One of the purple fish which produced the colour for which Tyre was so famed was lately caught here by the pilot of the port, and sold to Lady H.

Stanhope for some hundred piastres. But of all the spectacles that astonished me in the East, none surprised me so much as the performance of the lateral operation for the stone by this same pilot, who is an old Syrian Christian of seventy years of age; a boy of thirteen was operated upon, his hands and feet were held by the attendants; the old man introduced two fingers into the rectum, pressed the stone against the perineum, and cut down on it with a common razor. All this time he continued pressing the stone with the left hand against the incision; having felt the stone through the incision, he applied a long pair of scissars with blunt points, and formed into a forceps by the blacksmith; with these he grasped the stone, which was the size of a large walnut: there was little bleeding; and from the short time in which the operation was performed I have no doubt the patient did well. Sir Astley Cooper could not have done the operation with more adroitness, albeit the old man's hand trembled very much. He told me he had extracted stones thirty-seven times, and only lost five patients. I cannot vouch for this; but he certainly displayed a vast number of calculi, great and small; and

the four largest, he told me, he extracted above the pubis, by the high operation. This poor man exercised the functions of pilot, of parish clerk, and first lithotomist. Both in Syria and Arabia I witnessed many operations of the barber-surgeons which would do honour to any hospital surgeon in England; in dislocations they are peculiarly expert; they are the best cuppers in the world, they simply scarify the part with a razor, and over this they apply, instead of a glass, a cow's horn, pierced at the end, and fitted with a leather valve, through which they suck out all the air, and this exhausts the horn: the quantity of blood extracted in this way is much greater than can be taken away by our glasses; but there is one fault, they cut too deep, and the cellular membrane protrudes through the incision; they never attempt any thing in the way of amputation, for the ligature is unknown to them. On the eye they perform various operations, removing staphylome, puncturing the cornea, and letting out the aqueous humour.

Hydrocele, which is so common in Egypt that perhaps every third person is affected with it, I have seen one barber in Siout hardy enough to

undertake the cure of, by incisions with a razor quite through the scrotum.

The Egyptians are also expert at removing small calculi by the urethra, employing a number of straight sounds to dilate the passage for a long period, till the membrane at last loses its elasticity, and becomes a flabby pouch, through which the calculi pass of their own accord, at least without any application of forceps. I saw seven stones which had passed in this way from the urethra of an Arab I attended, the largest being very nearly the size of a kidney bean.

The Arabs of Mount Lebanon are very expert at bleeding under the tongue: Lady H. Stanhope first pointed out to me the advantage of abstracting blood in this way in cases of determination to the head. But their mode of bleeding in the arm is so dangerous, that I never saw an Arab barber bleed a patient that I did not tremble; they cut both veins indiscriminately, heedless of the artery which lies under the inner one; and instead of introducing the lancet in a slanting way, they plunge it right down, and yet they very rarely wound an artery, when they do (I knew it occur once in Alexandria), they bind

the arm so tight as to stop the circulation, and sometimes to induce gangrene.

In the cure of worms they are particularly clever*.

For every complaint, rheumatism especially, they use the actual cautery: a man thinks no more of being fired in Cairo than one does in England of being shaved. The Arabs either have less nervous sensibility, or more moral courage than Europeans.

* They consider the bark of the pomegranate as a specific, not only for ascarides, but also for the tape-worm. I have rarely seen it fail in the cure of tænia. They make a decoction of two ounces of the fresh bark in a pint of water; this they drink daily till the worm is expelled, which it generally is the third day. But the most valuable of all remedies for the tape-worm is an Abyssinian plant, called Cossu; I believe I am the first person who brought it to England. The history of this invaluable and almost unknown plant is very singular. In 1823 I found, as I passed through Paris, that the French botanists had just given the name of Brayer to an Abyssinian anthelminthick, which they extolled to the skies, and had decreed all the honours of the Academy to the discoverer, Dr. Brayer, of Constantinople. Three years after this I received a letter from Dr. Brayer, requesting me to write to Abyssinia for a provision of the invaluable Cossu, and enclosing me a treatise he had just published on the virtues of the plant he had been so fortunate as to discover, though he had never visited Abyssinia. In the mean time

I at last embarked for Egypt, with the Rev. Mr. Muller, taking care not to forget the conical head which has undergone a sea christening, and is now called St. Saba.

I am, my dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

Mr. Coffin arrived in Egypt from Abyssinia, and brought with him a quantity of this plant, which he prized as he did the apple of his eye; but I was fortunate enough to get some ounces of it, which I have since presented to Dr. Ramage, &c.

On my arrival in England, on looking over Bruce, I was astonished to find a long and most accurate description of the Cossu, and a drawing of the plant; so that what now goes under the name, in the French botanical works, of "The plant Brayer," is found in Bruce's fifth volume, page 45, called "Cossu," or "Bankesia Abyssinica," after Sir Joseph Bankes.

Thus has poor Bruce been again cheated of his well earned fame; and the name of a Frenchman given to a plant which Bruce was the first to describe and discover, and that most accurately. The flowers only are used in medicine; the dose is an infusion of three or four drachms in a pint of boiling water. Of all remedies for worms, this is the only specific. The tree attains to twenty feet, the leaf is two inches long, the flower consists of five petals, with a short pistil, and eight stamina.

LETTER XL.

TO JOHN ELMSLIE, ESQ.

DEAR SIR, Alexandria, Nov. 1, 1827.

DURING my last residence in Damietta, I attended, almost nightly, the Arab conversazioni of the principal people of the place, as the late events in the Mediterranean created considerable interest in every town in Egypt. At one of these entertainments the discourse appeared to me of more than common interest, so that, on returning to my lodging, I set down the particulars of the conversation, as the opinions of men of rank and fortune, and such as prevail amongst the higher classes in these countries. For obvious reasons I deem it advisable to omit the names of these Moslem politicians; for Mohammed Ali is as a very Christian prince in his animosity to that licentiousness which has its origin in freedom of discussion.

Figure to yourself a quadrangular apartment, with a raised platform occupying the upper half, furnished with a divan on either side for the guests, and one at the extremity, beneath the window, with an additional mattress, for the host and the most important personages present. Below the platform is seen a crowd of slaves and servants, standing in respectful order, each one watching every motion of his master to fetch the coffee or the pipe. Fancy an Arab improvvisatore in the centre, recounting anecdotes of Haroun el Raschid, or the adventures of Ebn Oaz;—a pious Imam laying down the law, or explaining the important distinction between an ablution commenced at the tip of the elbow and one begun at the top of the little finger. A barber-surgeon astonished his hearers with the wonderful effects of the moon on the circulation of the blood;—how Sheik Daoud, the great author of the History of Physic, first discovered the ebb and flow of the blood, like that of the ocean, to be governed by the nocturnal planet. A Hadji, with a venerable beard, narrated the wonders of the Wilderness; how he had been stripped and plundered by the Wahabees, whose chief was said to deal with the *Shitan*,

and to sicken the camels of the pilgrim in the Desert. A Turkish officer calculated how many Christians he could cut down with a single blow of his sabre; or, enumerated all the infidel princes of Europe who pay tribute to the Sultan, and send their slaves to his Porte to hold his foot stirrup. A Levantine Christian, with all the importance of a "Konsul," or, at least, a drogueman, talked of astronomy to the gaping Arabs, like a learned Theban, and defended himself from the charge of blasphemy for asserting that the earth turned round the sun; the prophet never having asserted any thing of the kind. A Cadi, as a judge of the land, gave his grave decision on every disputed point; as to the culpability of entering a mosque with the left foot foremost, or the criminality of giving the *salaam* of peace to a Christian. A young Arab, with his clumsy lute, draws tears from the moaning listeners, while he sings of some gazelle-eyed charmer whose face was like the moon, and her figure like a javelin, who pined away till she lost her shadow, because her lover, a young Sheik, abandoned her for another. Imagine all this, and you will have a tolerable idea of the regular even-

ing conversazione of an Arab man of quality. The topics are those of grown up children, the amusements are of the same character; they carry this puerility even to their palates, and vie with any youngster in fondness for sweetmeats and sugar-plums.

The Navarino business now gave a political turn to their discussions, and many of their opinions of European policy and power were so singular, that I could with difficulty bring myself to believe they were seriously delivered.

A fierce looking little man with a green turban, high in office, broached the subject of the late battle: "The Giaours have burned our ships," said he, "but God will burn them, hell is a hot couch, and a grievous couch it shall be to them we are told by the Prophet." "Please the Lord," responded a fat merchant, and his Inshallah was doled out with great devotion. "Were all the ships in the world joined against the Sultan in the battle?" asked an Arab Sheik in the simplicity of his heart; "Ay, all," answered a Ulema of great eminence, "all the Caffres of Franguestan were leagued against the true believers, how else could they prevail, what ten of

them could face one true Moslem? but ten thousand to one are too great odds; and were there not forty thousand of their ships against us?" "Allah Wakbar," said an Effendi, a man of learning, "there is but one God, and if the English were not in Navarino, the Francowa, the Nempsowa, and the Muscowa, would now be food for the kelp el bahr!" the sea dogs. "Allah Karim!" ejaculated an old priest, "God is most merciful, it is only the infidels who say that the ships of the Sultan were burned; it is impossible, because the Giaours could not burn them." "Callam thaib!" cried a dozen of the party, "it is well spoken, it is the ships of the unbelievers that are burned, not the Sultan's." "Did not the Algerines" said a grave old man "destroy the entire fleet of the English a few years ago, and where were they to find another all at once? is a ship like a pastek, a water melon? does it grow in the land? is it like a rain drop? does it fall from the sky?" "Wallah callam thaib!" God was called to witness by several, that it was a good saying.

"The English are a great people," said a young Malim, a secretary of the Governor's, "they are a very great people, what razors can be compared

to English? what pistols vie with those of England? do not the Pacha's cannons come from England?" "It is very true," replied the Ulema, "and they have conquered all the world excepting the dominions of the Sultan. India is theirs, and some say the Indian Moslems are their slaves." "*Min Allah*, heaven forbid!" exclaimed the priest, "a Moslem under an infidel, it cannot be; the Lord would not suffer a dog, a Caffre to call a true believer Servant; Min Allah!"

"It is even so," said the Effendi, "and the English now want to be our masters, and they will be one day. It has been long prophesied we must fall; Stamboul will see the son of yellowness, the Russian within her lofty walls, and Masr will be a bone between the dogs of France and England, but the latter must have it." "If either of the Caffres must have it," said the fat merchant, "let it be the French; if we only could keep our money and our women out of their reach, they are good humoured infidels enough, they love *fantasia*, they are always merry."

"It was not easy," said the divine, "when they were here, to keep either our money or our women from the Caffres—confusion to their race; the

other infidels plundered the people less; but who loved them more? Were they not both the enemies of God's Prophet and his law?"

A good looking young man in an Arnaout uniform, who had hitherto been silent, now gave his opinion of the two powers: "The English Giaours," said he, "have most money, because they have only to send to India for as many ship loads as they please, and they can better afford to pay men for fighting for them than the others. The French bring no money with them; wherever they go they pillage, but they never take a paras away with them after all. Whichever gives the best *thyme*, rations, is the Giaour for an Arnaout."

"Surely," exclaimed the Malim, "you would not draw your sword for a dog, a Christian?"

"For no man who did not pay me," replied the Arnaout, evading the question.

"What, for a Caffre?" rejoined the Malim. "Why not," said the Arnaout, "when the business is to cut another Caffre's throat?"

This was a good joke, and every one felt himself bound to laugh. When silence was restored, the lawyer put a question which puzzled the whole assembly exceedingly: "Where is

England?" "England," replied the priest, with the supercilious air of superior knowledge, "England is in London!" "La! la! moush kiddi," cried the Effendi, the man of learning; "England is not in London, London is only a *belled*, a town, but England is in the great sea of the north, it is an island, like America, which is also English."

"That's impossible," said the lawyer, "so great a nation never could be an island; are the people of Scio or Cyprus to be compared to the English, and are not both those places islands?"

"Do the French come from an island too?" said a Sheik, from Assouan, who had never seen an island but that of Elephantina, "there cannot be many of them then."

"When they were here," said the *Malim*, "there was no scarcity of them, they were forty thousand strong in Scanderia alone."

"Do not talk of thousands," exclaimed the priest, "*callam milliouni*, the word is millions; were they not like locusts from Scanderia to Assouan?" "With ten thousand Arnaouts," said the young soldier, "I would have driven them into the sea, every Caffre of them. How many thousands of English did we not trample on, in Raschid, a

few years ago?" "They were five and twenty thousand strong in Rosetta," said the lawyer, "and they were all slain." "Not all," answered the Effendi, "the General got his life, but there were only five thousand of them altogether."

"Five thousand or twenty," cried the lawyer, "is it not all the same thing; were they not all infidels, and were they not vanquished with the sword of Islam?"

"Allah karim," cried the priest, "God is most merciful; such be the fate of all who believe not in the true Prophet, to whose name be eternal glory."

"If the Sultan," said the Effendi, "had taken off the heads of the Janissaries a hundred years ago, the law of Islam would now be spread over the whole earth."

"As it is," replied the priest, "are not the true believers like the stars of heaven? who can count them? is not their empire over the whole earth from the rising even to the setting place of the sun."

"It is not in the Frozen Ocean, however," said the Levantine, "there are no Moslems there."

"It is a lie," said the priest, "they are every where, the Prophet has said it."

"What, in America?" said the Levantine, "it was only discovered a few years ago!"

"Well, then, if it was not known to the Prophet," replied the priest, "of course he had nothing to say to it."

"But," continued the Levantine, in a low voice, "the law of the Prophet could not be intended for all mankind."

"It was meant for the universe," said the priest, "and hell's fire is the portion of him who rejects it."

"If every man is bound to fast the Ramazan, from sunrise to sunset," replied the Levantine, "on the pain of reprobation, the Moslems of the Frozen Ocean, where the days are six months long, should feel somewhat exhausted."

"I do not believe it," cried the priest in a fury, "who ever saw a day six months long? who could sleep an entire night of six months long?—no man."

"But I read it in a book," said the Levantine, "written by the famous Volney."

"What is written in the perspicuous volume of truth," replied the priest, "admits neither of doubt nor disputation; there is not a word in the Koran concerning the days of six months' duration, neither of the nights, therefore I disbelieve it, because it is impossible."

"Kaif," said the Levantine, "do as you please, but truth is *one*:"—a very common expression of the Arabs, and is generally the ne plus ultra in an argument.

The host was a merry sort of fellow, who made a jest of every subject, and a butt of every man, even of the priest: the guests dropped off one by one: the Levantine and myself got a nod to remain; and when we were quite alone the rakee bottle was produced, it circulated briskly; and the politicians who had just departed were turned into ridicule by the host.

"You might as well talk to a *gamous*, a buffalo," said he, "as to that lawyer, of any thing except bribery: it was a folly, hakkim, to contradict him about the geography of England, you might as well reason with a *pastek*, a water-melon, for he has no more brains."

I left my worthy host singing an interminable

Arab ditty to the air of Malbrook, over the second bottle of rakee, and I could not help observing, what I had often done before in Turkey, that the winebibber was seldom a fanatic; from what cause I know not, unless it was from his loving what the Christian liked, and that being sympathy.

I am, dear Sir,

Yours very truly,

R. R. M.

LETTER XLI.

TO MRS. E. FORDE.

MY DEAR MADAM, Alexandria, Nov. 6, 1827.

THIS is the last time I am likely to have the pleasure of addressing you from the shores of Egypt. The lengthening chain which I have been dragging for some years now only attaches me to "the land of bondage" by the last link, and in a few days it shall be broken.

I embarked on board an English brig at Sour for Damietta, congratulating myself on my escape from many perils which I fondly hoped were all at an end; but the evening of our departure we observed a suspicious looking vessel hovering about us for some hours; she stood in for Sour at nightfall, and we saw nothing of her till the following morning. She did not keep us long in suspense; her boats were soon out, and in the

course of a quarter of an hour we were the lawful prize of a Greek pirate, having a cargo of Turkish tobacco on board, with false papers from the Consul, purporting the cargo to be his property; while in a private letter the Greek Captain discovered the real Arab papers of the Syrian merchants. A strong rope was fastened to our bows, and we were towed in the wake of the Greek brig, which mounted eighteen guns and was manned by ninety men. In the evening the Captain sent us the pleasing information that we were bound for Napoli di Romania, and directed us to follow all his movements.

My first interview with him was any thing but agreeable, he insisted that I was a Turk, one of Mohammed Ali's people, who had been in England; no Englishman, he said, could have so long a beard or brown a complexion; I showed him my passport, but he threw it on the deck; I then took some pearl crosses from my pocket, which I had purchased in Bethlehem, and asked him if Turks were in the habit of carrying Christian emblems? this staggered him a little, but I thoroughly convinced him I was an Englishman by ordering up some wine, and plying him with

"potations pottle deep." I became quite a favourite, and the following day he sent his boat for me to go aboard his brig to dinner. I found him in the cabin already half drunk with rosoglio, several bottles of which I observed about the cabin, which he told me he had taken from a Genoese vessel. While we were at dinner, word was brought to him that a Turkish ship of war was in sight; he ordered the decks to be cleared and the guns run out, and gave me my choice of remaining on board, or going back to my own vessel, I chose the latter. The Turkish vessel was at a great distance; we could plainly see she was pressing all sail to get clear of us; but the Greek chased her, and in about two hours she was boarded: instead of being a vessel of war, she turned out to be an Arab schooner, bound for Syria, freighted with rice and corn, and carrying twenty Turkish passengers, most of whom were Turks from Damascus and Tripoly, and richly dressed; she was soon laid along-side of us, towed as we were; and in the course of an hour I saw the Captain armed with a *yatican*, and a dozen of his people going on board her. It

made me shudder to see the Greek, sword in hand, stepping on the deck; the consternation of the unfortunate Turks was dreadful, they thought the naked sword was not brought there without a purpose, and they soon were on their knees, clinging to the Greek sailors, begging their lives; I saw the Captain striking one of them with the flat part of the sword, and a little boy, a grandson of the Captain's, took the knife out of his girdle and stabbed an old man in the arm who was trying to kiss the hand of the little rascal. The Greeks, however, aboard our vessel assured me there would be no murder, but probably a little flogging to make the Moslems confess where they had hidden their money. The pirate sat on the poop, and one poor wretch after another was stript and examined. I remarked one proud Moslem splendidly dressed, dragged before the Captain; one of the sailors tore off his koran, and threw it in his face; another trampled on the green turban, the exclusive badge of the family of the Prophet; another seized his pistols, another his clothes, till he was left without a stitch but his shirt and drawers, and in this way they were all

served. Three of the youngest of the men, an Arab woman, and a little girl, were then taken for slaves, and sent aboard the brig; the poor little girl was torn from her distracted mother, who petitioned to be taken with her child, but her cries were disregarded; after the child was torn from her, I saw her following the little creature with her eyes, frantic with grief she tore her hair by handfulls from her head; at last I saw her make a desperate plunge from the deck, she was seized when she was half over the side of the vessel, and was carried below by main force. I entreated of the Greeks to allow me to speak with the Captain, but they would not hear me; the cargo was then taken out, the sail and cordage, and even the water, and in this state the unfortunate wretches were left at the mercy of the wind and waves. If the cold blooded politician throw an imputation on the memory of Canning for the treaty of June, let him be answered with this history, and learn that it was to put an end to such horrors, and to far more bloody atrocities than those, that the Minister of Great Britain adopted a measure which the

interests of humanity at least rendered expedient. The following day I was sent for to act as interpreter between the pirate and his prisoners, neither he nor one of his people knew a word of Arabic: I was happy to see that the poor fellows were well used, and that one of them was employed in the cabin as the Captain's Turkish secretary, copying the Arab manifestos of our cargo.

I observed two captives on the deck this day whom I had not seen before, and whom I recognised at once as Indians, from their complexion and attire. They told me, in Arabic, they were British subjects, from Bombay, that they had been on a pilgrimage to Mecca, and were proceeding to Jerusalem when they were taken in an Arab *shatoor* by the pirate, and they entreated of me, as they were *my countrymen*, to procure their liberty. I resolved on doing so; I found I could at any time lay my friend, the pirate, under the table, probably from his being half drunk when he sat down to dinner. This day, after proposing a variety of healths to George Canaris, to Colocotroni, and many other Greek heroes, I ventured to

remind him of the service my country had always rendered Greece, and of the shame it would be in England to hear that two British subjects were taken as prisoners by the captain of a Greek man of war. I suggested the propriety of giving them both as a present to Captain Hare, as some compensation for the loss of his freight; he said he would give them both to me, but I positively refused, so eventually, I persuaded him to send them both aboard to Captain Hare.

In the course of the evening he took it into his head to give up the idea of taking us to Napoli, and resolved on taking out our cargo where we were. Our vessel was soon laid close along-side of him, and every hand aboard him was soon employed in taking out the tobacco of the poor merchants of Tyre. In sixteen hours the entire cargo was out; and, in about three hours more, we took in from the brig as much ballast as we required.

I supped with the pirate while the work of plunder was going on, and, by dint of persuasion, I prevailed on him to pay the Captain his freight; this he agreed to do, but when it came to the point he could only give half the amount in

money, and for the remainder he gave him some bales of cotton; but, on the Captain's arrival in Damietta, the greater part of the money proved false.

After settling the account he insisted on our having a bottle of wine; I made no objection, it was the prelude to my demand of the little girl who had been torn from her mother. I was now such a favourite with the pirate, he could refuse me nothing; he made me a present of the child, and, lest he should repent of his promise, I took her in my arms and conveyed her into the boat. There was still the young Arab woman whom I had seen taken out of the schooner, and her usage was so bad that I determined on having her ransomed also: the following morning I sent a present to the Captain of several little crosses and Bethlehem shells, with representations of the crucifixion, which proved a most acceptable present.

Captain Spiro Calefatto, as he nick-named himself, was probably as great a scoundrel as any in existence, but he was excessively devout; he never "broke the fast," though he was always drunk, and he never plundered a ship without

first saying his prayers. In common conversation, talking of his atrocities, he made the sign of the cross every five minutes.

When the hour of our liberation came he pretended to be very sorry to part with me; he begged of me to remain with him as his brother, I should have a large share of the plunder, the vessel was his own, and, in short, he would make me his heir. "If you wish really," said I to him, as I was going down the side of the brig, "to make me your friend, and to have your name rendered famous in my country, either give or sell me the young Arab woman; if you refuse, it will be the first time I ever asked a favour of a Greek which was not granted."

"Take her, and may confusion fall upon her race," he exclaimed, and, with the flat part of his long knife, he trounced her all the way up the deck, from the forecastle to the companion. I succeeded in getting her into the boat, thanked him with all my heart, and got on board our vessel. Four happier people, I believe, were not in the world than the two Indians, the Arab woman, and the little girl.

On my arrival in Damietta I presented them all

to the Governor, and got him to write to Tripoly and Beirout, where the schooner was bound to, for the purpose of finding out the mother, and informing her of her child being in safety.

We had but one small barrel of water left when we parted with the pirate. The head of St. Saba, as the Captain called it, seemed to have brought us no good luck, for no sooner did we lose sight of the pirate than we encountered an adverse gale, which kept us five days in sight of the coast of Egypt, to the east of Damietta. I began to think there was some truth in the words of the monk, and that no bone from Mar Saba was ever carried beyond the seas.

The sixth day we saw a boat at some distance, which we hailed, and into it Mr. Muller and myself got. We were about ten miles from the shore, and in an open boat with a heavy sea and a boghass to traverse, on which there is always a tremendous swell; it was a serious thing to venture on landing; but our boatman was called "the devil of the boghass" of Damietta, and we trusted to his skill. We were nearly abreast, at length, of the Tannitic mouth of the Lake Menzalè, the breakers were roaring on the bar, and the passage

appeared to us impracticable; the Arabs, however, determined on venturing, and in a few minutes we had the white surge dashing over us. Some people might have found the scene awfully grand, for my part, I thought it awfully terrific: one moment we were on the top of a curling wave, the next moment in a trough, around which nothing but the white foam was visible; the sail went flapping to and fro for at least five minutes; I would have given some piastres St. Saba had his head: I was on the point of making a vow to send it back, when the sail caught the wind, and in five minutes we were on the tranquil bosom of the Lake, as if we had been shot from the caverns of Pluto into the Elysian fields.

My friend, Mr. M——, bore all the unpropitious occurrences of our voyage with heroic fortitude; and, after seven days' comparatively delightful travelling, we arrived in Alexandria. Here I found Mr. and Mrs. Montefiore on the point of setting out for Palestine: it required more than ordinary courage to think of undertaking the journey at such a moment, when the recent news of the battle of Navarino had spread universal consternation in every European bosom,

and had irritated the people of the country against every Frank; they surmounted, however, every obstacle which was thrown in their way, and set out for the Holy City. They had the good fortune to accomplish their journey with perfect safety, and Mrs. M—— is one of the few Frank ladies who have traversed the rugged mountains of Judæa.

It was settled, on their setting out, that I should await their return to accompany them to Europe; and, in the mean time, I was prevailed on to attend Mr. Salt (whom I was grieved to find in a wretched state of health) on an excursion up the Nile. It was evident, indeed, that in accompanying him, I was taking on myself an awful responsibility, but it appeared to him, and to his worthy friend, Mr. Thurburn, that a removal from the damp and unwholesome atmosphere of Alexandria was the only chance for him, and even that was a very poor one. At *Dessuke*, on the Nile, he became so feeble that it was impossible to proceed further; and here, after a fortnight's suffering, he breathed his last.

I had but one consolation, and that was, that being possessed of his entire confidence, I was enabled to soothe his last moments with all the

attention that friendship might demand in a country where virtue can hardly command respect, and where sickness calls forth little sympathy. No one unacquainted with Egypt can form an adequate idea of the loss of Mr. Salt at such a moment. The battle of Navarino had but just taken place, and though the Pacha appeared little affected at the destruction of his fleet, his real feelings were unknown, but many distrusted his intentions. Mr. Salt had considerable influence over him, and possessed his confidence, and during his illness Mohammed Ali absolutely refused to communicate with Mr. Barker, who unfortunately was obnoxious to him: at last it was agreed on, that Captain Richards, of the Pelorus, should be the medium of communication between our Government and his Highness. Whoever is destined to replace Mr. Salt, as Consul General at Egypt, has no little difficulty to encounter, and not a few invidious comparisons to expect. He is to be the successor of an honourable and talented individual, of a gentleman and a scholar, of a man whose suavity of manners and integrity of principle rendered him beloved by Europeans,

and respected by Mahometans; of one who deemed not arrogance essential to his dignity, and who supported that dignity without having recourse to the miserable pageantry of the Levant.

I am, my dear Madam,

Your very obedient Servant,

R. R. M.

FINIS.

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